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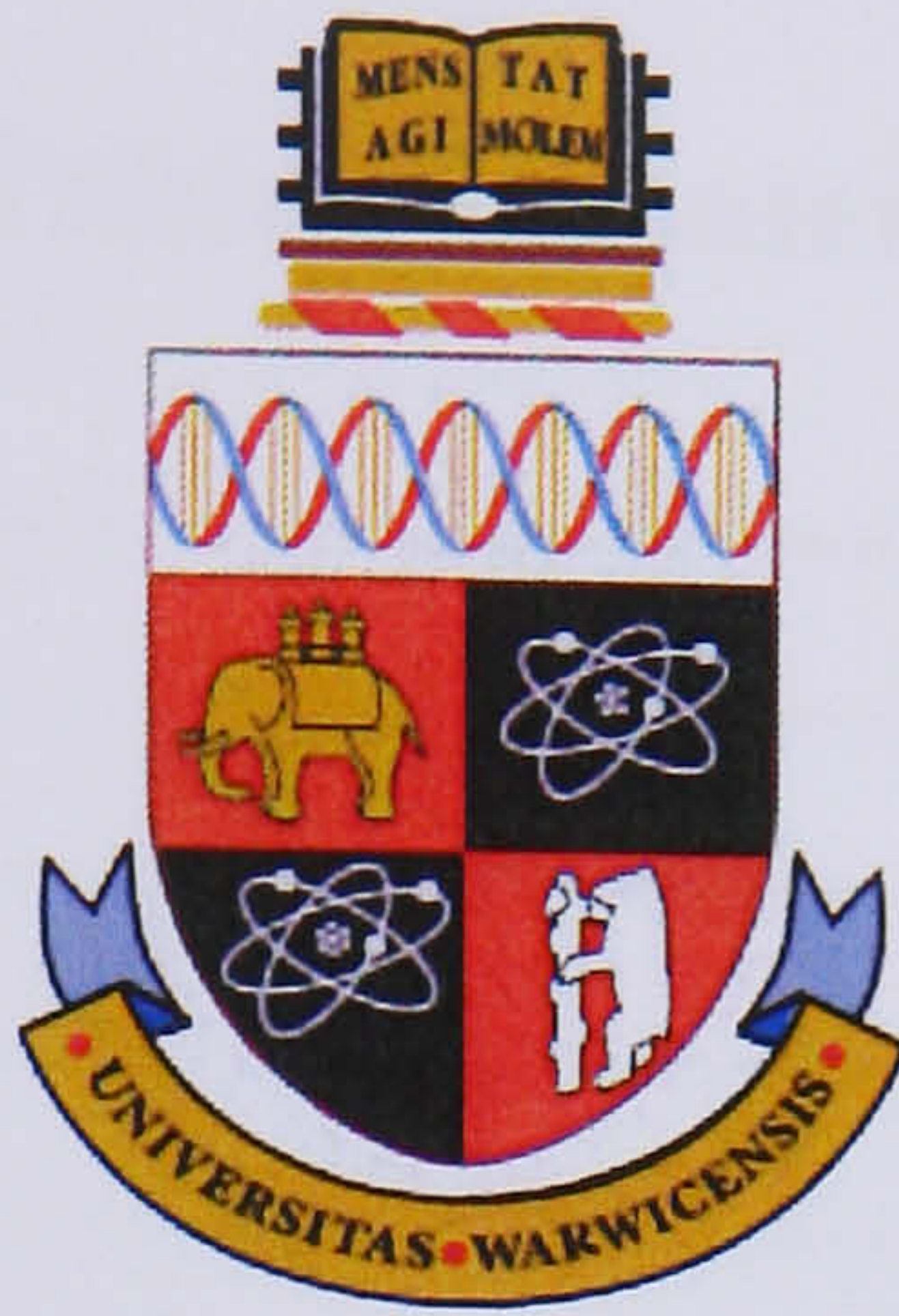
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Drivers of Service Recovery Performance: Perceived Organisational Support, Learning and Psychological Job Outcomes

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Industrial and Business
Studies

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents, my brother, Diana and my grandmother. The fact that I have been abroad all these years is a priceless gift that only love can explain.

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Declaration

This is to declare that:

- This thesis has been written by me.
- I am responsible for the research work submitted in this thesis.
- All verbatim extracts have been distinguished and the sources specifically acknowledged.
- This research has not been submitted within a degree programme at this University or any other institutions of higher learning.

Signature: Cristiane Reginal G. de Jesus

Date: 28 / 06 / 2007

Abstract

Service recovery is an under-researched area in theoretical and empirical terms (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). In particular, limited knowledge exists regarding the factors which have an impact on the service recovery performance of frontline employees (Boshoff and Allen 2000). This research draws on goal orientation theory, perceived organisational support theory and the literature on psychological job outcomes and service recovery, in order to investigate the drivers of service recovery performance. The major goals of this study are to determine the effect of learning goal orientation on service recovery performance and the impact of perceived organisational support on learning goal orientation. Additionally, the effect of both learning goal orientation and perceived organisational support on emotional exhaustion is investigated. These simultaneous relationships are empirically tested for the first time.

Following a review of the key literature, an integrative conceptual framework comprising a set of hypotheses is proposed and empirically tested in the UK. A total of 740 frontline service employees from the catering industry (representing a response rate of about 32%) provide the data for the analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is employed to assess the fit of the seven measurement components of the model and structural equation modelling (SEM) is used to test the hypothesised path model. The findings provide academic insights that may open new fruitful avenues for further research. In particular, two unexpected results contradict the extant theory: job satisfaction has a negative impact on service recovery performance and emotional exhaustion has a positive impact on service recovery performance. The new empirical results reveal that learning goal orientation has a positive impact on service recovery performance. Additionally, perceived organisational support has a positive effect on learning goal orientation. Moreover, whereas perceived organisational support has a negative impact on emotional exhaustion, learning goal orientation is unrelated to emotional exhaustion. Finally, the findings provide several managerial implications for service marketing practitioners by offering them practical guidelines to develop and implement effective service recovery programmes. Suggestions are provided in terms of the best practices when recruiting and training frontline service employees.

Abbreviations

ADM	-	Assistant Department Manager
AGM	-	Area General Manager
CFA	-	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	-	Comparative Fit Index
DM	-	Department Manager
GA	-	General Assistant
IFI	-	Incremental Fit Index
LISREL	-	Linear Structural Relations
EE	-	Emotional Exhaustion
EFA	-	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EM	-	Expectation Maximisation
GFI	-	Goodness-of-Fit Index
JS	-	Job Satisfaction
MAR	-	Missing At Random
MCAR	-	Missing Completely At Random
MO	-	Mastery Orientation
MSA	-	Motorway Service Area
NFI	-	Normed Fit Index
NNFI	-	Non-Normed Fit Index
OC	-	Organisational Commitment
OCB	-	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
POS	-	Perceived Organisational Support
PL	-	Personal Learning
RMSEA	-	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SEM	-	Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Science
SRP	-	Service Recovery Performance
VE	-	Average Variance Extracted
WLS	-	Generally Weighted Least Squares

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of the Research

The service sector has seen a continuous growth within the world's most developed economies (Rust and Chung 2006). This sector is characterised by intense competition among service providers (Shapiro and Nieman-Gonder 2006). One of the main challenges that firms face is maintaining service standards. Nevertheless, services are characterised by heterogeneity and simultaneity of production and consumption (Rust and Chung 2006). The heterogeneity characteristic is reflected in less standardised outcomes as compared to machinery production processes, which results from the fact that service industries are human-intensive in nature (Berry 1980). Moreover, the characteristic of inseparability of services, i.e., a service is simultaneously produced and consumed and there is co-production (Berry 1980), makes it impossible to guarantee a 100% error-free service (Brown, Fisk, and Bitner 1994). Based on these two characteristics of services, it is somewhat likely that there will be certain failures in service delivery.

“To err is human; to recover divine” (Hart, Heskett, and Sasser 1990, p.156)

Theoretical and empirical studies on service recovery are scarce (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). As a result, service recovery has been identified as a neglected area which requires further scholarly research (McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998; Brown, Fisk, and Bitner 1994). In this

study, service recovery performance may be defined as the individual frontline service employee's perceptions of his/her own skills and actions, whilst resolving a service failure so as to guarantee customer's satisfaction (Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000).

From a practitioners' viewpoint, there is a call for firms to pay considerably more attention to recovery (Tax and Brown 1998), since they are not knowledgeable about dealing successfully with service failures or about the consequences of complaint handling strategies (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). Nevertheless, service marketing executives are faced with a problem: they have few empirical guidelines to help them to introduce recovery strategies (Boshoff and Allen 2000). Therefore, although service recovery is acknowledged by both service researchers (e.g. Tax and Brown 1998; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998) and service managers as a cornerstone of a customer service strategy (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999), limited knowledge exists regarding the factors which have an impact on the service recovery performance of frontline employees (Boshoff and Allen 2000). Thus far, the only three studies in the area (Boshoff and Allen 2000; Babakus et al. 2003; Karatepe 2006) have found that the antecedents of service recovery performance are employee rewards for providing customer service excellence, empowerment, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, trait competitiveness, intrinsic motivation, role ambiguity and age. This research contributes to the service recovery literature by suggesting additional antecedents that have not been previously addressed, namely perceived organisational support and learning goal orientation. Moreover, despite emotional exhaustion being hypothesised as affecting service recovery performance, this relationship was found

not to be significant (Karatepe 2006). In this study, emotional exhaustion as an antecedent of service recovery performance will be empirically tested for a second time to assess whether the previous results were context specific. Additionally, this research responds to a call by Kelley, Hoffman, and Davis (1993) regarding the need for future research to investigate recoveries using a different methodology from critical incidents, namely survey research methods.

There are three underlying reasons for focusing on service recovery performance from the frontline employees' perspective. First, most research to date has studied service recovery from the consumers' perspective (e.g. Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999; Tax and Brown 1998; Kelley, Hoffman, and Davis 1993). Second, the key role played by frontline employees in service recovery has been widely acknowledged (Boshoff and Allen 2000; Boshoff 1997) due to the fact that very often they are the ones receiving the complaints. Third, frontline staff's service recovery function is rarely implemented properly (Boshoff 1997).

In this context, the present research is aimed at gaining a better understanding of the determinants of employees' evaluation of their own service recovery performance in order to fill the aforementioned gaps.

1.2 Research Problem and Research Objectives

Limited knowledge exists regarding the factors which have an impact on the service recovery performance of frontline employees (Boshoff and Allen 2000). As a result, the *overall objective* of this research is to identify and analyse the influence

of perceived organisational support, learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes on service recovery performance, as perceived by frontline employees. In order to accomplish the general research objective, several specific research objectives emerge:

- 1) To assess the importance of learning goal orientation in determining service recovery performance, both:
 - a) directly;
 - b) indirectly through psychological job outcomes, namely job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion;
- 2) To evaluate the impact of learning goal orientation on two components of psychological job outcomes, in particular job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion.
- 3) To study the role of psychological job outcomes in explaining service recovery performance, in particular:
 - a) the effect of job satisfaction on service recovery performance;
 - b) the impact of organisational commitment on service recovery performance;
 - c) the effect of emotional exhaustion on service recovery performance;
- 4) To evaluate how perceived organisational support affects learning goal orientation, in particular personal learning and mastery orientation;
- 5) To determine the impact of perceived organisational support on psychological outcomes, namely job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion.
- 6) To assess the relationships between/among elements within the same group, in particular:

- a) personal learning and mastery orientation, within the learning goal orientation domain;
 - b) job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and emotional exhaustion, within the psychological job outcomes' domain.
- 7) Based on objectives 1-6, to develop an integrative conceptual framework and empirically test in a single model the simultaneous links among the abovementioned variables;
- 8) To contribute to the service marketing literature in three ways: theory development, theory testing, and theory generalisation.
- 9) To provide service managers with practical guidelines to help them implement successful service recovery strategies (see Boshoff and Allen 2000).

1.3 Preliminary Conceptual Framework

As previously stated, the general objective of this study is to examine the influence of perceived organisational support, learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes on service recovery performance, as perceived by frontline employees. Founded on an exhaustive literature review on organisational support theory, goal orientation theory, psychological job outcomes and service recovery performance, an integrative conceptual framework will be presented in order to accomplish the abovementioned research objective. The framework comprises 1) the impact of learning goal orientation and perceived organisational support on psychological job outcomes, 2) the effect of both learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes on service recovery performance, as well as 3) the impact of perceived

organisational support on learning goal orientation. Figure 1.1 illustrates the preliminary conceptual framework.

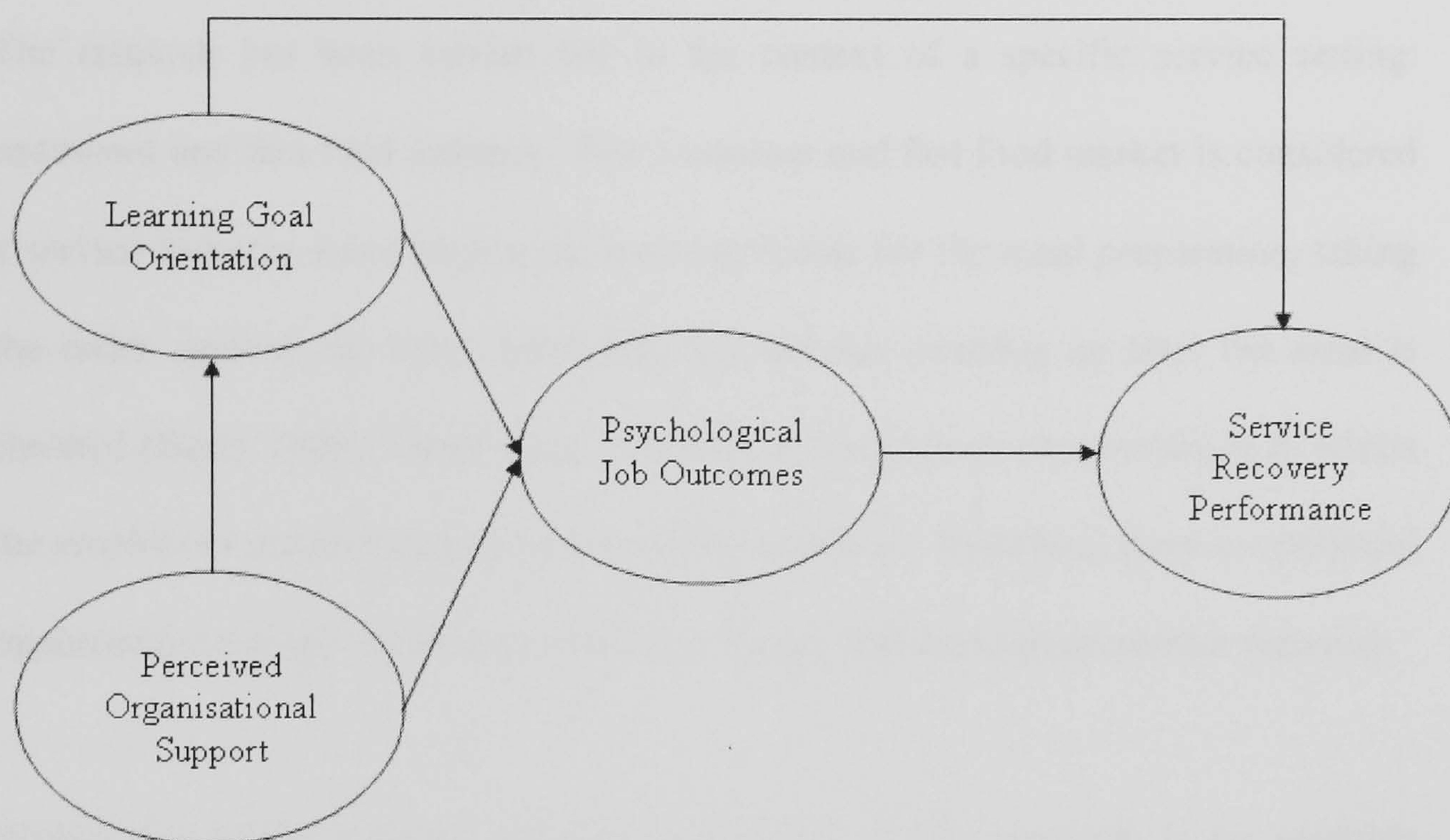


Figure 1-1: Preliminary Conceptual Framework

1.4 Research Methodology

1.4.1 Research Setting

The UK has been selected as the context for the study. Previous research into service recovery has been conducted in the USA (e.g. Hess, Ganesan, and Klein 2003; McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998), Australia (e.g. McColl-Kennedy, Daus, and Sparks 2003), New Zealand (e.g. Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005) and Turkey (e.g. Babakus et al. 2003). To

the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to analyse the service recovery phenomenon in a European Union (EU) country.

The research has been carried out in the context of a specific service setting: restaurant and fast food industry. The restaurant and fast food market is considered a service industry since employees are responsible for the meal preparation, taking the order, serving the meal, providing the bill and cleaning up after the meal is finished (Berry 1980). These tasks represent the numerous circumstances in which the employees are providing a service to the customer. Therefore, there are plentiful opportunities for the occurrence of service failure and consequent service recovery.

Within the British catering industry, the focus of this research is on roadside catering, in particular *motorway service areas* (MSAs). The market is comprised by eight motorway service areas' operators. Moto is currently the largest UK operator, followed by Welcome Break, with RoadChef in third place. The study was conducted across multiple locations of "firm X", which consists of 48 sites. Each of "firm X"'s site may comprise several catering franchises, namely Little Chef, Burger King, Harry Ramsdens, Ritazza and Upper Crust. The existence of several different franchises within each site and the multiple site locations guarantee variance in the data.

1.4.2 Targeted Respondents

The data for this study were collected at the *individual frontline employee* level. Frontline catering employees were selected as respondents, since these individuals

are the most prone to addressing service failure through recovery efforts (Boshoff and Allen 2000). Another reason is that the closer the individual who executes the recovery is to the real service failure, the more significant the improvement in customer satisfaction (Boshoff 1997). This is justified by the fact that frontline employees work on the “boundary,” frequently interfacing the customers (Johnston et al. 1990), and therefore, they are the ones most likely to accurately assess the customer’s needs (Boshoff 1997). Additionally, they are also expected to understand clearly the efficiency of their recovery efforts.

In conclusion, the type of employees investigated were *catering employees* in *frontline* positions and the study focused on a single-company workforce.

1.4.3 Data Collection

Survey data were collected from all frontline catering employees in fifty-five motorway service areas¹.

Previously, the pre-testing of the questionnaire was executed in five sequential stages:

1) Comments on the initial draft of the questionnaire by one academic and the Human Resources Director of the company.

¹ Note that if there are two motorway service areas (MSAs) in the same location (i.e., one MSA in each side of the road, e.g. Washington North and Washington South), the researcher considered these as two different MSAs.

- 2) Six focus groups with three to six frontline employees each. In total, thirty employees (i.e., general assistants –GAs- and supervisors) participated at this stage. In addition, an area general manager (AGM) provided comments on the survey.
- 3) Informal meetings with two academic experts in the Marketing area to assess content validity.
- 4) Additional focus groups of frontline employees: three focus groups of four frontline employees each were conducted.
- 5) Other four academics were asked to re-asses the content validity of the questionnaire items.

After the pre-test of the survey instrument, survey data were collected from all catering employees in fifty-five motorway service areas of the largest operator in the UK. A total of 2324 catering employees received an envelope containing a cover letter, a survey, and a return prepaid envelope. The data collection lasted for four weeks. By the cut-off date, 839 surveys were returned, for a response rate of around 36%. Nevertheless, 99 of the questionnaires received were not usable, yielding a usability response rate of about 32%.

1.4.4 Data Analysis

Firstly, a rigorous data screening process prior to multivariate data analysis is executed. After this data screening process, the sample is reduced to 740 valid cases. Secondly, all research constructs were subjected to a reliability analysis using the software package SPSS 14. Thirdly, the scales are further tested by using confirmatory factor analysis with LISREL 8.72 (Joreskog and Sorbom 1996-2001).

At this stage, the assessment of the psychometric properties of the constructs, namely internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity, are carried out. Moreover, the appraisal of the model fit for each individual construct as well as the overall measurement model is performed. Finally, the researcher employs the SEM (i.e., structural equation modelling) approach to test the hypotheses using LISREL 8.72 (Joreskog and Sorbom 1996-2001).

1.5 Expected Research Contribution

1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution

It is anticipated that this study will provide theoretical contribution in several ways. To the best of the author's knowledge, only three studies (Karatepe 2006; Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000) thus far have researched service recovery performance from the frontline employees' perspective. Building on these previous studies, this thesis further explores the determinants of service recovery performance. Therefore, it is expected that a contribution at the *theory development* level will be produced.

Moreover, at the theory development level, this thesis is expected to contribute to the service marketing literature by incorporating the learning goal orientation concept. Accordingly, several new relationships are theoretically proposed and empirically tested (e.g. the relationship between perceived organisational support and personal learning). In addition, it is expected that other relationships, which fall

within the scope of this research and that have been theoretically proposed but not empirically tested, be tested in this study.

At the *theory testing* level, the contribution is twofold. This research not only re-tests scales that have been used in previous studies (e.g. perceived organisational support) but also the relationships addressed in past research (e.g. the link between emotional exhaustion and organisational commitment).

It is anticipated that a contribution will also be made in terms of *theory generalisation*. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to analyse the service recovery phenomenon in a European Union (EU) country. Past research into service recovery performance has been carried out in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Turkey.

In sum, several theoretical contributions, namely to theory development, theory testing and theory generalisation, are expected from this thesis.

1.5.2 Managerial Contribution

From a managerial viewpoint, there is a call for firms to pay considerably more attention to recovery (Tax and Brown 1998) since companies are not knowledgeable about dealing successfully with service failures (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). However, service managers are faced with a problem: they have few empirical guidelines to help them to introduce recovery strategies (Boshoff and Allen 2000). This thesis aims to address this gap by providing service

managers with practical guidelines for managing service recovery and developing service recovery procedures. It is expected that the results of this study will confirm the idea that service recovery performance must be taken into account in human resource management practices (Tax and Brown 1998). Therefore, the author expects to offer managers useful guidelines in terms of the selection criteria to be used when selecting and recruiting frontline service personnel as well as the issues that should be addressed in the training sessions provided by the company to the service frontline personnel.

1.6 The Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of nine chapters. In the present chapter, the scope of the research, the research problem, the research objectives and the methodology have been presented. Subsequently, a comprehensive literature review (Chapter 2 to Chapter 4) is given. Chapter 2 reviews goal orientation theory and individual learning literature. Chapter 3 explores the theory of psychological job outcomes and perceived organisational support. Chapter 4 describes the scant theory on service recovery performance. Founded on the literature review, Chapter 5 then proposes a conceptual framework which includes thirteen research hypotheses to be empirically tested. Chapter 6 describes the data collection and data analysis procedures. Chapter 7 presents the research findings regarding the eighteen hypotheses, which emerged from the data collection. Chapter 8 analyses and discusses the core findings of this thesis. Finally, the conclusion chapter (Chapter 9) provides the theoretical and managerial implications of this research, and addresses

the limitations of the thesis. Moreover, fruitful directions for future research are suggested. A simplified structure of the thesis is summarised in Figure 1.2.

1.7 Summary

The Introduction chapter provides an overview of the thesis. The researcher starts by delimiting the scope of the research. This is followed by a statement of the research problem, as well as an identification of the research objectives. The methodology employed and the expected contribution of the research to both theory and management practice are described. Finally, the overall structure of the thesis is presented.

The subsequent chapters (Chapter 2 to Chapter 4) review the extant literature on goal orientation theory and individual learning (Chapter 2), psychological job outcomes and perceived organisational support (Chapter 3) and service recovery (Chapter 4).

Chapter 1:	Introduction Scope of the Research Research Problem and Research Objectives Preliminary Conceptual Framework Research Methodology Expected Research Contribution The Structure of the Thesis
Chapter 2	Goal Orientation Theory and Individual Learning Goal Orientation Theory Performance Goal Orientation Learning Goal Orientation Individual Learning
Chapter 3	Psychological Job Outcomes and Perceived Organisational Support Psychological Outcomes Perceived Organisational Support
Chapter 4	Service Recovery Background The Concept and Measurement Antecedents of Service Recovery Performance Consequences of Service Recovery Performance
Chapter 5	Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Key Concepts for the Study Conceptual Framework Determinant of Learning Goal Orientation Determinants of Psychological Job Outcomes Determinants of Service Recovery Performance
Chapter 6	Research Methodology Research Design Development of the Survey Instrument Administration of the Survey Instrument Data Analysis
Chapter 7	Research Findings Data Screening Prior to Multivariate Data Analysis Profile of the Sample Data Analysis Structural Model
Chapter 8	Discussion Determinants of Learning Goal Orientation Determinants of Psychological Job Outcomes Determinants of Service Recovery Performance
Chapter 9	Conclusion Overview of the Thesis Summary of Research Findings Theoretical Implications Managerial Implications Research Limitations Future Research Directions

Figure 1.2: Simplified Structure of the Thesis

2 GOAL ORIENTATION THEORY AND INDIVIDUAL LEARNING

2.1 Introduction

The literature on goal orientation dates back to the 1980's, when Dweck and colleagues (Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988) introduced the concept by conducting research with children in academic settings. VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) argue that goal orientation studies have their roots in the fields of educational psychology and child development (e.g. Ames and Archer 1988; Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988).

Due to the potential importance of the goal orientation construct in organisational research (Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996), the study of goal orientation expanded from educational psychology to the management arena in the 1990's (e.g. VandeWalle 1997; VandeWalle and Cummings 1997; Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle et al. 1999). Within the marketing field, only three studies, carried out in a sales context, have analysed goal orientation (see Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998; Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005).

Recent advances in the goal orientation literature have contributed significantly to the growth of individual learning research (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). This study focuses on individual learning. In particular, an analysis of its antecedents,

i.e., perceived organisational support, and its consequences, specifically psychological job outcomes and service recovery performance, will be performed.

This chapter began by presenting a synopsis on goal orientation theory. Section 2.2 provides an overview of the research developed to date on goal orientation theory and specifies the measures used to assess goal orientation. The aim is to broadly understand goal orientation theory and its sub-dimensions, namely performance goal orientation and learning goal orientation. After introducing the goal orientation theory, section 2.3 examines specifically the various aspects of the performance dimension of goal orientation, including its antecedents, consequences and correlates. Subsequent to the review of literature on the performance dimension, section 2.4 summarises the key issues regarding the learning dimension of goal orientation, namely the antecedents, consequences and correlates. Learning is the dimension of goal orientation that is the focus of this research.

Thus, sections 2.1 to 2.4 explain goal orientation theory, in order to establish the context within which individual learning emerges. Section 2.5 reviews the literature on individual learning and establishes the link between goal orientation theory and individual learning. The chapter concludes by highlighting the contribution of this research to the extant literature.

2.2 Goal Orientation Theory

In this section an overview of the existent literature on goal orientation is provided. In particular, the measures employed to assess goal orientation are identified. The aim is to broadly understand goal orientation theory and its sub-dimensions, namely performance goal orientation and learning goal orientation.

Goal orientation is “a mental framework for how individuals interpret and respond to achievement situations” (Brett and VandeWalle 1999, p. 864). Thus, goal orientation may be defined as an individual’s disposition toward developing or demonstrating one’s competence in achievement situations (Dweck 1986; Vandewalle 1997).

In the last two decades, research on goal orientation has increasingly developed in theoretical and empirical terms. Goal orientation studies have their roots in the fields of educational psychology and child development (e.g. Ames and Archer 1988; Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988) (VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum 2001).

In the 1980’s, Dweck and colleagues (Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988) introduced the concept of goal orientation, by conducting research with children in academic settings. The authors argue that individuals have different goal orientations- i.e., individual differences for goal preferences- in achievement situations such as the classroom. Thus, they have identified two broad classes of goals pursued by individuals as a personality dimension within the intellectual achievement domain: these are *learning goals* and *performance goals*.

When a learning goal orientation is adopted, individuals aim to increase their competence by acquiring new skills and mastering new situations. In other words, they try hard to understand something new, or to develop their competence in a particular activity (Dweck and Leggett 1988; Heyman and Dweck 1992; Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996). When a performance goal orientation is followed, individuals intend to demonstrate and validate their competence by seeking favourable judgements and avoiding negative judgements of their competence via task performance. In other words, they may regard achievement situations as an opportunity to test and assess their competence, as well as to be judged capable and not incompetent (Dweck and Leggett 1988). Thus, learning goals are associated with competence enhancement, ability improvement and performance goals with competence judgements, ability proof (Dweck and Leggett 1988).

Dweck and colleagues implicitly suggest that goal orientation is a single continuum, with two polar opposites: a strong performance goal orientation and a strong learning goal orientation (Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996). Therefore, individuals are categorised into one of the groups. The option of holding both performance goal orientation and learning goal orientation to a certain degree is not considered.

Despite having its roots in educational psychology, goal orientation may be a crucial construct in organisational research since it may have key implications on substantive areas (Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996). For this reason, in the 1990's, goal orientation research expanded from its limited base in educational psychology to the management arena (e.g. VandeWalle 1997; VandeWalle and Cummings 1997; Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle et al. 1999). Building on Dweck and colleagues' pioneer work, management and psychology scholars contributed to

the conceptual development of goal orientation by suggesting that goal orientation may be better conceptualised as a three-factor construct (Vandewalle 1997). Therefore, goal orientation encompasses learning orientation and two distinct dimensions of performance goal orientation: a “prove” dimension/performance “approach”, and an “avoid” dimension/performance “avoidance” (Vandewalle 1997; Elliot and Harackiewicz 1996; Elliot and Church 1997).

In the organisational behaviour context, the “prove” goal orientation dimension focuses on the desire to prove and demonstrate one’s ability. Individuals seek to gain favourable judgements as to their competency from others, as well as favourable feedback about their performance relative to others (Vandewalle 1997; Brett and Vandewalle 1999). Brett and Vandewalle (1999) add that performance-prove oriented individuals wish to look better than others. On the other hand, the “avoid” goal orientation dimension focuses on the desire to avoid disproving ability and negation of one’s competence. Individuals desire to avoid negative judgements about their ability (Vandewalle 1997). In sum, the distinction between prove-performance orientation and avoid-performance orientation dimensions reflects the difference between positive and negative self-evaluation (Brett and Vandewalle 1999).

For researchers in psychology, the performance “approach” is based on self-regulation, with the goal of positive results, and performance “avoidance” is related to potential negative results which lead to higher anxiety, lack of concentration, and evasion from threatening situations (Elliot and Harackiewicz 1996). Empirical results of factor analysis (e.g. Vandewalle 1997; Elliot and Church 1997) support

this “trichotomous” achievement goal framework since the three goal constructs have been found to be independent (Elliot and McGregor 2001).

More recently, Elliot and colleagues (Elliot and McGregor 2001; Cury et al. 2006) proposed a four dimensional model denominated 2×2 achievement goal framework. The 2×2 achievement goal framework integrates the learning-performance division with the approach-avoidance distinction. The learning-performance division is founded on how competence is defined (in line with absolute/intrapersonal standards or normative standards, correspondingly), while the approach-avoidance distinction is based on how competence is valenced (according to positive possibilities or negative possibilities, respectively). The novelty in relation to the “trichotomous” achievement goal framework is the division of the mastery (learning) goal orientation into mastery-approach and mastery-avoidance goals. The authors claim that in mastery-approach goals, competence is defined in absolute/intrapersonal terms and is positively valenced. In mastery-avoidance goals, on the other hand, competence is also defined in absolute/intrapersonal terms but it is negatively valenced. In other words, in both types of mastery goals, competence is defined in relation to whether the individual gained understanding or mastered a task (absolute standard) and developed one’s skills (intrapersonal standard). The distinction between approach and avoidance mastery orientation is based exclusively on the valence of competence. Competence is valenced, in the sense that it is built in terms of a positive possibility- success- as is the case with mastery-approach goals. Alternatively, competence may be constructed as a negative possibility – that of failure– which occurs with mastery-avoidance goals.

In conclusion, in the early stages of goal orientation research, the 80's, academics conceptualised it as a two-factor construct. In the 1990's, it developed to become a three-factor construct. Recently, it has been conceptualised as a four dimensional framework. The underlying assumption of each of these conceptualisations is that individuals are incorporated in *only one* class of goal orientation.

Recent research has moved away from the dichotomous mastery versus performance goal orientations by proposing a *multiple goal perspective* (e.g. Harackiewicz et al. 2002). Therefore, learning and performance goals are neither mutually exclusive, nor at the same time conflicting (Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996). The authors argue that an individual may be simultaneously following each type of goal and hence they propose several combinations of goals. The individual may try hard to improve his/her skill and concurrently perform well in relation to others (i.e., high learning, high performance). Alternatively, one may be disinterested in both types of goals (i.e., low performance, low learning). Finally, individuals may favour one type of goal over the other, i.e., they follow mostly either performance goal orientation or learning goal orientation. It is likely that this multiple goal perspective will be generalised to the “trichotomous” as well as to the 2×2 achievement goal framework.

2.2.1 Measures of Goal Orientation

Several measures have been proposed in order to assess goal orientation.

Button, Mathieu, and Zajac (1996) suggest a 20-item scale composed by two uncorrelated dimensions of ten items each. The performance goal orientation items

refer to the avoidance of challenging activities, the preference for not making mistakes, and performance evaluation based on normative standards. The learning goal orientation dimension reflects the preference for challenging tasks, the desire to improve oneself, and performance evaluation based on past performance results.

VandeWalle et al. (1999) measured the two-goal orientation dimensions using 11 items from Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar's (1994) work, based on results by Ames and Archer (1988). The learning goal orientation dimension comprised six items, all of which concern the extent to which salespeople valued the development of their sales skills. The performance goal orientation component included five items, delineating the extent to which salespeople valued that others were aware about their sales performance. Also Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla (1998) assessed learning goal orientation with six items, and performance goal orientation using five items drawn from Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar's (1994) study.

VandeWalle (1997) suggested a 13-item instrument comprising three subscales: 1) five items measuring learning goal orientation; 2) four items assessing the prove dimension of performance goal orientation; and 3) four items measuring avoid-performance goal orientation. VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) also used 13 items divided among three dimensions – learning, proving-performance and avoiding-performance- when assessing academic goal orientation.

In sum, extant research in educational psychology and in management considers goal orientation to be divided into learning goal orientation and performance goal orientation. Some authors believe, also, that performance goal orientation comprises

two distinct dimensions, approach/prove and avoidance/avoid. In addition, other scholars argue that learning goal orientation also includes two dimensions: approach and avoidance.

Next, both types of goal orientation, namely performance and learning, will be explained in greater detail.

2.3 Performance Goal Orientation

Subsequent to the literature review on goal orientation theory, this section examines in depth one of its sub-dimensions, namely performance goal orientation. Issues such as the antecedents, consequences and correlates of performance goal orientation are discussed.

Performance goal orientation may be defined as both the desire to gain favourable judgements and the desire to avoid unfavourable judgements about one's ability (Heyman and Dweck 1992). Since some authors (e.g. VandeWalle 1997; Elliot and Harackiewicz 1996) have partitioned the performance goal orientation into two distinct dimensions, it is useful at this stage to define what is meant by prove goal orientation and avoid goal orientation. *Prove* (performance) goal orientation is defined as the desire to prove one's ability and gain favourable judgements about it; while *avoid* (performance) goal orientation is defined as the desire to avoid disproving one's ability and to avoid unfavourable judgements about it (VandeWalle 1997).

Dweck's motivational theory (Dweck 1986) establishes a clear link between goal orientation and the theory of ability (Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996). More specifically, this theory suggests that goal orientation is a dispositional trait, varying with the individual's implicit theory of ability. Thus, performance goal orientation is related to personal beliefs regarding ability and effort (Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum 2001). Performance goal-oriented individuals tend to follow an *entity* theory about their intelligence, i.e., they view intelligence and knowledge as fixed, uncontrollable personal attributes (Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988) and thus success when performing a task depends mostly on innate ability (VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum 2001). The satisfaction with outcomes for performance-oriented individuals is based on the ability they feel they have demonstrated (Dweck 1986). Given that individuals regard ability as hard to develop, they aim to attain positive judgements in regards to the competence they do possess; their goal is to be judged able, and to avoid negative opinions on their competence (Dweck 1986; Ames and Archer 1988). Since the focus is the end result, individuals are afraid to fail, and they concentrate on the consequences of their poor performance (Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988; Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle et al. 1999). One demonstrates evidence of ability by achieving success in the short-term, rather than the long-term, and by outperforming, or not appear worse than others; or by being successful with little effort (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005; Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Ames and Archer 1988). Indeed, performance goal-oriented individuals regard significant effort as a sign of low ability because a person would not have to struggle so much to accomplish a task if his or her ability is high (Vandewalle 1997; Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum 2001).

Dweck and colleagues (Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988) claimed that dispositional goal orientation impacts on the cognitive and behavioural response patterns of individuals in achievement situations. More specifically, the authors argue that individuals with a performance goal orientation have a specific response pattern to task failure, task challenge or both. Performance-orientated individuals view a challenging task as a risk, since the potential of failure which would demonstrate their inadequate ability exists (VandeWalle et al. 1999). Consequently, individuals tend to adopt defensive strategies (Dweck 1986) and the corroboration of ability is made at the expense of learning new things (Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988). In challenging situations, they pursue a *maladaptive* response pattern, in which they drop out the task; make negative ability attributions; report decreased interest in the task; avoid challenge; and observe the deterioration of their performance (Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988). In a services context, this *maladaptive* response pattern would reflect on employees' reluctance to try new customer service approaches, as well as challenging situations (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994).

Dweck and colleagues (Dweck 1986; Elliot and Dweck 1988) suggested that when individuals are oriented toward ability evaluation, and thus follow a performance goal, their achievement pattern (helpless or mastery-oriented) depends largely on their perceived present ability. When individuals pursue performance goals and perceive their current ability as being low, they exhibit the *helpless* behaviour pattern in failure situations. This *helpless* pattern is characterised by low persistence under difficult conditions, a negative affect such as anxiety, and the selection of easier tasks which avoid negative judgements of competence. On the contrary,

when individuals follow a performance goal, but have a high assessment of their current ability, they display the *mastery-oriented* behaviour pattern. In this context, individuals are highly persistent in the face of difficulty and they select the challenging performance tasks which promote learning and allow them to gain a positive judgement of their competence.

From a “trichotomous” achievement goal perspective (Elliot and McGregor 2001), performance-approach goals are related to *mastery-oriented* behaviour pattern and performance-avoidance goals are, meanwhile, linked to *helpless* behaviour pattern.

2.3.1 Antecedents of Performance Goal Orientation

Personality traits such as the need for learning, materialism, trait competitiveness, conscientiousness and openness to experience have been investigated as personality antecedents of performance goal orientation (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005).

Dweck and Leggett (1988) suggested that the entity theory of intelligence is a reliable predictor of performance goal orientation.

Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994), meanwhile, found that negative feedback has a positive impact on performance orientation for both low and high self-efficacious salespeople. In other words, salespeople tend to react to negative feedback by trying to show their ability independently of their level of confidence.

Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla (1998) found a positive impact of all supervisory orientations, namely end-results orientation, activity orientation and capability

orientation, on salesperson's performance orientation.

2.3.2 Consequences of Performance Goal Orientation

Salesperson's customer and selling orientations, and overall work satisfaction (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005) have been examined as consequences of performance goal orientation. The authors found a positive impact of performance orientation on selling orientation and work satisfaction, and a non-significant effect on customer orientation.

Past research has analysed the relationship between performance goal orientation and task performance. Some researchers found a positive relationship (e.g. Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998), while others found a non-significant one (e.g. Phillips and Gully 1997; VandeWalle et al. 1999) and the others a negative one (e.g. Ford et al. 1998). Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994) found that working smart had a non-significant relationship with performance goal orientation.

Phillips and Gully (1997) found a negative significant relationship between performance goal orientation and self-efficacy in terms of academic tasks. VandeWalle et al. (1999) found that performance goal orientation was not related to the level of goal setting, or intended effort, but had a positive impact on both, intended territory planning and account planning.

Previously, the consequences of performance goal orientation were discussed when considering performance goal orientation as a unidimensional concept. Nevertheless, some authors have argued that performance goal orientation

encompasses two distinct dimensions: a “prove” dimension/performance “approach”, and an “avoid” dimension/ performance “avoidance” (Vandewalle 1997; Elliot and Harackiewicz 1996; Elliot and Church 1997). In line with the abovementioned stream of literature, the outcomes of performance goal orientation are now presented by considering two distinct dimensions, i.e., the approach and the avoid dimensions.

VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) showed that the proving and the avoiding dimensions of performance goal orientation have differential effects on feedback seeking. In Study 1, they found a statistically significant negative relationship between a) both the prove and avoid dimensions of performance orientation and b) feedback seeking. In Study 2, they only found a negative relationship with feedback seeking for the avoid dimension of performance-goal orientation. This link was mediated by the perceived cost and value of feedback seeking.

Elliot and McGregor’s (1999) longitudinal study investigated the influence of achievement goals on exam performance. They found that avoiding goal orientation had a negative relationship with exam performance in the midterm exam and in the pop quiz. VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) did not confirm the negative relationship between an avoiding goal orientation and performance in the first exam – they found a non-significant one- but they did confirm it for the second exam. In relation to the performance-approach goals, Elliot and McGregor (1999) and VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) reached the same conclusion: proving goal orientation had a positive relationship with performance in the first exam, but a non-significant one with performance in the second.

VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) empirically proved the negative impact of avoiding goal orientation on self-efficacy and goal setting level as well as the non-significant effect on effort. For the other dimension of performance goal orientation, they found a non-significant impact of proving goal orientation on both self-efficacy and goal setting level and a positive effect on effort.

Finally, Brett and VandeWalle (1999) investigated goal orientation as predictor of content goals, which in turn was an antecedent of task performance. They found that performance-prove orientation affected positively the content of the goals individuals set, specifically comparison goals and the refinement dimension of the skill improvement content goal. It was also shown that performance-avoid goal orientation had a positive relationship with the avoidance content goal but a non-significant one with the other three content goals.

2.3.3 Correlates of Performance Goal Orientation

Button, Mathieu, and Zajac (1996) have sought to prove empirically that performance goal orientation is negatively correlated with age, and is not related with gender and self-esteem. They found in their research that the theory of ability was negatively related to performance goal orientation, whereas the work locus of control and the occurrence of obtrusive thoughts during task performance were positively correlated with performance goal orientation. Furthermore, a non-significant relationship between performance goal orientation and grade point average was demonstrated.

VandeWalle (1997) verified that both dimensions of performance goal orientation were positively related with the fear of negative evaluation by others. Moreover, performance-avoid goal orientation was found to be positively related to test anxiety (Middleton and Midgley 1997).

In the foregoing section, the performance dimension of goal orientation was explained in order to guarantee a comprehensive analysis of the goal orientation theory. Nevertheless, since the focus of this research is individual learning and its connection to the goal orientation theory is made through learning goal orientation, the performance dimension of the goal orientation theory is excluded from further analysis. In the following section, the learning dimension of goal orientation is explained in further detail.

2.4 Learning Goal Orientation

Learning is the dimension of goal orientation, which is the focus of this research. Consistent with the review of literature on the performance dimension of goal orientation presented previously, this section summarises the key issues regarding the learning dimension of goal orientation, namely its antecedents, consequences and correlates.

Psychologists (e.g. Ames and Archer 1988; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988) argue that one of the goals pursued by individuals in achievement situations is a learning goal (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994).

VandeWalle (1997, p. 1000) defines learning goal orientation as “a desire to develop the self by acquiring new skills, mastering new situations, and improving one’s competence”. Learning-oriented individuals tend to be curious and to search, instigate and pursue challenging tasks which gives them an opportunity for intellectual personal growth and development (Dweck 1986; Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994). A learning goal orientation is related to self-improvement, and one’s gratification with the learning process: that is, learning new things and working on new ideas, whilst making an individual effort to master the performed tasks (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). Learning goal orientation is associated with individual beliefs regarding ability and effort (Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum 2001). Thus, individuals follow an *incremental* theory of their ability; they view intelligence as a malleable, increasable personal attribute which can be constantly developed through effort and experience (Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996).

When individuals pursue a learning goal, and are thus oriented towards skill acquisition, the evaluation of their current ability level is irrelevant when following a specific behaviour pattern, i.e., independently of their skill level being high or low, they always follow a *mastery-oriented* pattern (Elliot and Dweck 1988; Dweck and Leggett 1988). A mastery-oriented pattern may be considered to be adaptive, since it comprises the search for challenge and eagerness to maintain commitment to difficult tasks (Dweck and Leggett 1988). When responding to task difficulty, task failure, or indeed both, individuals follow an *adaptive* response pattern, in which they are highly persistent; escalate effort; keep themselves motivated and

striving; engage in solution-oriented self-instruction and self-monitoring; and seek challenging tasks and sustain or improve performance (Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988) namely in the interactions with customers. When these individuals do not succeed, they regard the failure as a means of receiving useful feedback (Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996).

Ames (1992) argues that learning goal orientation influences how individuals see effort expenditures. Learning goal-oriented individuals strongly believe that effort leads to success (Ames and Archer 1988; Brett and VandeWalle 1999). Effort is regarded as a strategy for developing the ability required for mastering new tasks and as a way for stimulating one's present ability for task achievement (Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle et al. 1999). Effort is also a factor that stimulates satisfaction with performance, i.e., individuals' satisfaction with outcomes is based on the effort they have employed (Dweck 1986). Thus, one's personal development results from the effort made when performing a challenging task (VandeWalle 1997).

People with a learning goal orientation aspire to master tasks in order to learn from experience, develop their competency and gain new expertises (Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle et al. 1999). These individuals are also characterised by the use of more effective learning strategies and by having a more positive attitude toward their social reality (Ames and Archer 1988). Errors are considered natural, and as an educational part of the learning process (Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988). Ultimately, the goal is to improve ability and develop new skills (Ames and Archer 1988; VandeWalle et al. 1999; Harris,

Mowen, and Brown 2005).

2.4.1 Antecedents of Learning Goal Orientation

Personality traits such as the need for learning, materialism, trait competitiveness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience have been investigated as personality antecedents of learning goal orientation (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). In an earlier study, Wang and Netemeyer (2002) have already shown that trait competitiveness is positively related to learning effort.

In a sales setting, positive and negative supervisory feedback was analysed insofar as it was an antecedent of learning orientation (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994).

Finally, in the management literature, the presence of mentoring and mentoring functions have been examined as antecedents of personal learning (Lankau and Scandura 2002).

2.4.2 Consequences of Learning Goal Orientation

Previous studies have analysed cognitive self-regulation tactics and sales performance (VandeWalle et al. 1999; Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998). In particular, VandeWalle et al. (1999) found that a learning goal orientation resulted in higher sales performance and that this link was fully mediated by the three self-regulation tactics, namely goal setting, intended effort and intended planning. The

authors found that learning goal orientation was positively related to the level of goal setting and intended effort, as well as intended territory planning and account planning. Phillips and Gully (1997) found different results in connection with the relationship between learning goal orientation and goal setting. They found that learning goal orientation does not have a direct effect on goal setting, though it has an indirect effect through self-efficacy. Additionally, these authors demonstrated that learning goal orientation had a positive impact on self-efficacy. In other words, individuals with a higher learning goal orientation are expected to have higher self-efficacy than individuals with a lower learning goal orientation.

VandeWalle and colleagues (VandeWalle et al. 1999; VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum 2001) found a positive, statistically significant relationship between learning goal orientation and the following: effort, self-efficacy, and the level of goal setting, as well as planning (intended territory and account planning).

Several authors have analysed the direct and indirect relationships between learning goal orientation and performance outcomes. The reported results are mixed.

Elliot and McGregor's (1999) longitudinal research found that learning goal orientation was not related with exam performance. On the other hand, VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) proved that learning goal orientation had a positive relationship with the first and second exams. Moreover, in a longitudinal field study with salespeople, VandeWalle et al. (1999) proved that learning goal orientation had a positive relationship with sales performance.

Brett and VandeWalle (1999) showed that a learning goal orientation had a strong impact on skills improvement content goals relating to performance. Finally,

VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) have argued that high learning goal orientation is particularly important when feedback-seeking behaviour is required in order to improve performance. Thus, they found in study 2 that a learning goal orientation had a positive impact on the search for feedback, this link being mediated by the perceived cost and value of feedback seeking.

More recently, Seijts et al. (2004) concluded that self-efficacy and information search mediated the performance improvement resulting from setting a learning goal.

Variables such as salesperson's customer and selling orientation, and overall work satisfaction, have also been analysed in past research as consequences of learning goal orientation (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). Harris, Mowen, and Brown (2005) have shown the positive impact of learning orientation on customer orientation, the negative effect on selling orientation, and the non-significant effect on work satisfaction. Lankau and Scandura (2002) studied job attitudes, namely job satisfaction and role ambiguity, as well as turnover (i.e., intentions to leave a job and actual leaving) as consequences of learning goal orientation.

Other outcomes of learning goal orientation proposed by previous research are related to sales force behaviour, namely working smart and working hard (Sujaan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994). Together, working smart and working hard had a positive relationship with learning orientation.

2.4.3 Correlates of Learning Goal Orientation

Most studies appear to establish a relation of causality between learning goal orientation and other variables. Button, Mathieu, and Zajac's (1996) research is an exception as the authors mainly discuss the correlation among variables. In their study, they found that:

- Theory of ability was positively related to learning goal orientation;
- Learning goal orientation was positively related to an internal locus of control and self-esteem ;
- Learning goal orientation was positively correlated with one of the indicators of long-term academic achievement, namely the college grade point average, but not related with the other long-term academic achievement indicator, scholastic aptitude test;
- Learning goal orientation was not related to gender but positively related to age.

Additionally, Phillips and Gully (1997) have provided empirical evidence that learning goal orientation was positively correlated with internal locus of control, thereby confirming Button, Mathieu, and Zajac (1996)'s result. They also found a positive relationship between learning goal orientation and the need for achievement. Therefore, individuals with a higher learning goal orientation are more likely to have a higher internal locus of control and to value achievement more highly.

Given that the focus of this research is individual learning and its connection to the

goal orientation theory is through learning goal orientation, the review of literature presented in the present section is the basis for the development of the study's conceptual framework.

2.5 Individual Learning

In the previous sections, goal orientation theory in terms of its major contribution to individual learning research was explained (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). This study aims to address a call made by Slater and Narver (1995) for the critical need for more exhaustive research on understanding individual learning processes. Therefore, the researcher draws on goal orientation theory, and more specifically, on the way it is oriented towards learning goals, so as to address the research questions. The main underlying reason for focusing exclusively on the learning orientation component of goal orientation theory is that this is the most crucial dimension to the development of individual learning research. An additional motive is that one of the research questions considers the relationship between goal orientation and performance outcomes (i.e., service recovery performance). It has been concluded in past research that a learning goal orientation is more likely to result in positive performance outcomes than a performance goal orientation (VandeWalle et al. 1999).

Learning is an important topic, due to the continuous learning demands imposed to all employees nowadays (Lankau and Scandura 2002). In the marketing literature, learning has generally been studied in the context of organisational learning (e.g. Sinkula 1994; Sinkula, Baker, and Noordewier 1997; Baker and Sinkula 1999).

Research on individual learning orientation has been relatively scarce when compared to firm-level/organisational learning (Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). Indeed, just a few marketing studies have considered learning from an individual perspective (see Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998; Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). Since analysing (learning) orientation is more adequate in contexts which involve customer service competencies (VandeWalle et al. 1999), these three studies investigated the individual learning of salespeople.

The focus of this study is on learning undertaken by organisation members, in particular frontline employees. The underlying reason for focusing on individual learning rather than organisational learning is that “...there is no organisational learning without individual learning...” (Argyris and Schon 1978, p. 20). In the light of this connection, this research addresses two specific gaps in the literature: 1) it contributes to the understanding of individual learning processes from a marketing perspective, and 2) it extends the study of individual learning to a new type of boundary spanners, specifically frontline employees.

It is believed that a major contribution to the marketing literature is made by focusing on a less established and discussed category of learning, namely individual learning.

Chapter 2 discussed the goal orientation theory and its two dimensions: performance orientation and learning orientation. Learning goal orientation is the theoretical foundation for the study of individual learning, which is the focus of this research. Therefore, anchored in the goal orientation theory, the learning goal

orientation concept will be incorporated in this research's conceptual framework to investigate the drivers of service recovery performance.

In the next chapter, a review of literature on psychological job outcomes, namely job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion, as well as perceived organisational support, is provided. These concepts will be incorporated into the conceptual framework as outcomes and antecedent of learning goal orientation respectively.

3 PSYCHOLOGICAL JOB OUTCOMES AND PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

In the following chapter, the literature on psychological job outcomes and perceived organisational support is reviewed. Both concepts will be incorporated into the conceptual framework as outcomes and antecedent of learning goal orientation respectively. The ultimate aim is to propose a conceptual framework of the drivers of service recovery performance comprising learning goal orientation, psychological job outcomes and perceived organisational support.

3.1 Introduction

Most authors consider that the concept of psychological job outcomes comprises job satisfaction and organisational commitment (e.g., Rhoads, Singh, and Goodell 1994; Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996; Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994), job tension (Rhoads, Singh, and Goodell 1994) or turnover intentions (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). Among these four concepts, the most frequently studied psychological job outcomes are job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Therefore, these will be incorporated in this investigation.

The way in which this research conceptualises psychological job outcomes differs from past studies (e.g., Rhoads, Singh, and Goodell 1994; Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994) in that such studies included the intention to leave/job tension within

the psychological job outcomes concept. In this study, intention to leave and job tension are not included. Instead the researcher incorporates emotional exhaustion as one of the psychological job outcomes, since prior research analysed it as the antecedent of both organisational commitment and job satisfaction (e.g. Babakus et al. 1999).

In contrast to Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994), the individual dimensions of psychological job outcomes are not treated as a second order construct. Rather, each component is analysed separately in order to understand the specific linkages among variables. Another reason for treating each dimension individually is that managers may act more easily upon each of them (Babakus et al. 1999).

In addition to the literature on psychological job outcomes, extant research on perceived organisational support is reviewed. Perceived organisational support may be defined as employees' general beliefs that their organisation values their contributions and cares about their welfare (Eisenberger et al 1986). This concept is strongly related to organisational commitment, since organisational commitment reflects employee's attachment to the organisation (Johnston et al. 1990), whereas perceived organisational support reveals an organisation's attachment to the employee.

Next, the researcher introduces *psychological job outcomes*, namely job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion, and its related literature by showing how it is conceptualised, as well as how the psychological job

outcomes construct is operationalised. This is followed by a review of the literature on *perceived organisational support*.

3.2 Psychological Job Outcomes

Next, an exhaustive review is provided of the literature on psychological job outcomes, since psychological job outcomes will be included in the conceptual framework as an outcome of both learning goal orientation and perceived organisational support and as an antecedent of service recovery performance.

Psychological job outcomes capture job attitudes, which reflect a psychological approach toward the job (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). Psychological job outcomes comprise three distinct constructs: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion. In the following sub-sections, each of these concepts is explained in further detail.

3.2.1 Job Satisfaction

Past research on job satisfaction is extensive. To provide a comprehensive literature review, the researcher starts by presenting some definitions and alternative measures of job satisfaction. This is followed by a review of its antecedents, which may be grouped into four categories, i.e., work outcomes, individual characteristics, role perceptions and organisational variables. Subsequent to the antecedents, the most widely researched consequences of job satisfaction are discussed. This is

followed by a review of the literature on the variables that have not been hypothesised to be either an antecedent or consequence of job satisfaction, but a correlate of this concept.

Job satisfaction is one of the most comprehensively studied constructs in marketing research on salespeople (Brown and Peterson 1993), retail store managers (Lusch and Serpkenci 1990) and service providers (Boyt, Lusch, and Naylor 2001). Locke (1976, p. 1300) defines job satisfaction as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state”, which is “a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from a job and what one perceives it is offering”. Two decades later, other definitions have emerged. In particular, job satisfaction has been defined as an individual’s psychological well-being on the job (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994) or an employee’s overall emotional appraisal of his/her job condition.

Job satisfaction may be both a general and a multifaceted construct (Reichers 1986). There are essentially two general approaches to assessing job satisfaction. One measures satisfaction with different job facets (e.g. Churchill, Ford, and Walker 1974; Porter et al. 1974) while the other measures overall job satisfaction (e.g. Hackman and Oldham 1975).

One of the first measures of job satisfaction was that developed by Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1974) to assess salesman-specific job satisfaction. They have conceptually demarcated the domain of the job satisfaction construct as “all characteristics of the job itself and the work environment which industrial salesmen find rewarding, fulfilling, and satisfying, or frustrating and unsatisfying.”

(Churchill, Ford, and Walker 1974, p. 255). This INDSALES measurement scale assesses satisfaction by facet (Brown and Peterson 1993). The job satisfaction scale comprises several job facets, namely the supervisor, the job itself, pay, promotion opportunities, fellow workers, customers and company policy and support. Also Porter et al. (1974) developed the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) which measured satisfaction with five job facets: supervision, co-workers, work, pay, and promotion. Other studies measure job satisfaction globally by considering an overall measure in which a partition into different facets is not considered (e.g. Bagozzi 1980; Hackman and Oldham 1975). Previous research has shown that global assessment is superior to that based on facets (e.g., Scarpello and Campbell 1983). Therefore, in this investigation, a global measure of job satisfaction is employed.

It is also worth acknowledging that several researchers divide the job satisfaction construct into intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions (e.g. Bettencourt and Brown 2003). Nevertheless, the two main perspectives- i.e., satisfaction with job facets and overall job satisfaction- are the ones described in the beginning of this section.

3.2.1.1 Antecedents of Job Satisfaction

Previous research suggests that job satisfaction antecedents can be grouped into work outcomes, individual characteristics, role perceptions and organisational variables (Brown and Peterson 1993).

Within the **work outcomes** category, variables such as job performance and performance of the store are discussed. Christen, Iyer, and Soberman (2006) have reported a significant, positive impact of *job performance* on retail store managers' job satisfaction, whereas Lusch and Serpkenci (1990) found a negative, though insignificant, effect of job performance on retail store managers' job satisfaction. When the effects of common antecedents (e.g. effort, quality of supervision, clarity of job responsibilities) are controlled for, there is usually no causal relationship between performance and job satisfaction (Brown and Peterson 1993; Christen, Iyer, and Soberman 2006). Lusch and Serpkenci's (1990) results also have shown that the overall *performance of the store* does not have an impact on store managers' job satisfaction. Thus, store managers' job satisfaction is independent of both their own job performance and the performance of their store.

Since the relationship between job satisfaction and performance is characterised by contradictory findings, namely in terms of the direction of causality, it will be discussed in more detail in the section regarding the correlates of job satisfaction.

The **individual characteristics** group includes both demographic (e.g. age, education, organisational tenure and sales experience) and dispositional variables (e.g. work motivation, self-esteem, effort, and burnout). *Demographic variables* have mostly been analysed as correlates, and not as antecedents of job satisfaction. These will be discussed in the job satisfaction's correlates section. *Dispositional variables* such as work motivation and self-esteem have been found to impact indirectly on job satisfaction through sales performance (Brown and Peterson 1993). Few studies consider the employee's effort as an antecedent of job

satisfaction, and those that do tend to find a direct, positive impact of effort on job satisfaction (Brown and Peterson 1994). One exception to this is Christen, Iyer, and Soberman's (2006) research, which takes into account both the direct and indirect effects of effort on job satisfaction and presents different conclusions from previous research. They have demonstrated that effort has a positive, indirect effect on job satisfaction through a positive effect on job performance. They have also proved that the direct relationship between effort and job satisfaction is negative. The above mentioned negative, direct effect is of greater magnitude than the indirect, positive effect. Burnout has been extensively discussed in the literature as an antecedent of job satisfaction (Maslach 1982; Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). In particular, Babakus et al. (1999) and Karatepe (2006) have found a negative effect of emotional exhaustion, one of the components of burnout, on job satisfaction.

Salesperson's **perceptions about their role** within the company have been extensively researched and found to have a relevant impact on job satisfaction (Brown and Peterson 1993). Role stressors, namely role conflict, role ambiguity, and role clarity are considered antecedents of job satisfaction (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994; Brown and Peterson 1993). Several authors (e.g. Babakus et al. 1999; Behrman and Perreault 1984; Brown and Peterson 1993) have confirmed the negative effect of both *role ambiguity* and *role conflict* on job satisfaction. Other authors (e.g. Johnston et al. 1990; Teas 1983) have found that an increase in role conflict leads to a decrease in job satisfaction, whereas an increase in role ambiguity has a non-significant impact on job satisfaction. Moreover, Singh (1998) has reported a negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction and a

non-significant one between role ambiguity and job satisfaction. Rhoads, Singh, and Goodell (1994) divide role ambiguity into two dimensions: one is “internal” to the company and thus related to the boss, other managers and co-workers, while the other is “external” to the company and associated with family, customer, etc. They found that salespeople’s job satisfaction is strongly related to internal role ambiguity and weakly associated with external role ambiguity. Finally, despite hypothesising about the negative paths between both role ambiguity and role conflict, and job satisfaction, Boles, Johnston, and Hair (1997) have found non-significant paths. In sum, it is argued that the contradictory findings in the literature regarding the relationship between role perceptions variables, namely role conflict and role ambiguity and job satisfaction, are due to an inconsistent measurement and definition of constructs across studies (Christen, Iyer, and Soberman 2006). Therefore, the authors suggest that the powerful effect of role variables on job satisfaction should be re-examined.

Role clarity has systematically been found to have a positive relationship with job satisfaction (e.g. Kohli 1985; Teas, Wacker, and Hughes 1979). An improvement in leadership role clarification leads to an increase in job satisfaction (Johnston et al. 1990).

The **organisational variables** group chiefly comprises supervisory behaviours and job/task characteristics. Within the *supervisory behaviours* subgroup, issues such as consideration, recognition of achievements and communication among others are included. Thus, an encouragement of greater amounts of performance feedback, close supervision, consideration (Teas 1981), contingent approving behaviour

(Kohli 1985), recognition of achievements by sales managers as well as more frequent communication had been found to have an important effect on improving job satisfaction (Brown and Peterson 1993). Also Teas' (1983) findings suggest that a relationship-oriented supervisory style may have a positive link with a salesperson's job satisfaction.

Singh (1998) considers that *job characteristics* comprise autonomy, feedback, task variety and participation. He found that, with the exception of task variety, all other job characteristics have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction. Other researchers have shown that autonomy contributes positively to the job satisfaction of marketing researchers (Boyt, Lusch, and Naylor 2001) as well as department store employees (Teas 1981). In relation to participation, Teas' (1983) results indicate that salespeople's participation in decision-making is positively related to the salesperson's job satisfaction.

Other variables that may be included in the organisational variables group are *esprit de corps*, professional reward structure, workplace overall fairness, perceived organisational support, and customer orientation. It has been proved that *esprit de corps* (i.e., "a set of enthusiastically shared feelings, beliefs and values about the group membership and performance") is a significant, positive antecedent of job satisfaction (Boyt, Lusch, and Naylor 2001, p. 321). They have also found that a *professional reward structure* is a direct predictor of job satisfaction. Bettencourt and Brown (1997) demonstrate that *workplace overall fairness* is a positively related predictor of job satisfaction. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) argue that *perceived organisational support* has a positive impact on job satisfaction. Finally,

Donavan, Brown, and Mowen (2004) have found that *customer orientation* affects job satisfaction positively.

With the exception of Harris, Mowen, and Brown's (2005) work, the impact of learning goal orientation on work satisfaction has not been investigated. This study will address this gap by looking at the direct effect of learning goal orientation on job satisfaction. As a result, the contribution of the research is to test the unexplored direct relationship between the two variables in a new context, i.e., customer service context.

3.2.1.2 Consequences of Job Satisfaction

Prior research has considered several consequences of job satisfaction. Some authors have analysed the positive effect on *organisational commitment* (Sager 1994; Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996; Brown and Peterson 1993).

A previous debate regarding the job satisfaction-*intention to leave* relationship has relied on whether the impact of job satisfaction on intention to leave is direct or indirect and simultaneously mediated by organisational commitment. Some researchers have found a direct negative impact of job satisfaction on turnover intentions, i.e., intention to leave (Netemeyer, Johnston, and Burton 1990; Sager 1994; Babakus et al. 1999; Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996) whereas others (e.g. Johnston et al. 1990) have not found this direct effect. Alternatively, Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis results have demonstrated that the main effect is an indirect one, mediated by organisational commitment (e.g. Brashear et al. 2003).

In a dyadic study, Homburg and Stock (2004) have proved that job satisfaction was an important driver of *customer satisfaction*. They have demonstrated that this positive relationship is also indirect, and mediated by the quality of customer interaction. Additionally, they found a positive moderating effect of a) the frequency of customer interaction, b) the intensity of customer integration into the value-creating process and c) product/service innovativeness on the link between a salesperson's job satisfaction and customer satisfaction.

Another variable researched as an outcome of job satisfaction was that of *organisational citizenship behaviours*. In particular, Donavan, Brown, and Mowen (2004) have demonstrated that job satisfaction exerts a positive impact on OCB-altruism.

3.2.1.3 Correlates of Job Satisfaction

Brown and Peterson (1993) have classified the correlates of job satisfaction into different groups, namely **work outcomes** (i.e., performance and organisational commitment) and **individual characteristics** (i.e., demographic).

A comprehensive body of literature has addressed the question of causal ordering for job satisfaction- *performance* relationship (e.g. Bagozzi 1980). Since there is no agreement as to the direction of causality, performance is also incorporated in this literature review as a correlate of job satisfaction². Despite the uncertainty regarding

² Note that job performance and performance of the store have been previously discussed in the section regarding the antecedents of job satisfaction.

the direction of causality, past research has systematically shown a positive, modest link between (sales) performance and job satisfaction (Brown and Peterson 1993). Despite the great number of empirical studies showing a small positive association between sales performance and satisfaction, the argument by Behrman and Perreault (1984) that the frequently reported small positive relationship between performance and satisfaction may be spurious, rather than causal, is confirmed (Brown and Peterson 1993).

The same type of debate regarding whether *organisational commitment* causally precedes job satisfaction or vice-versa has been taking place (Brown and Peterson 1993). While some authors argue that organisational commitment precedes job satisfaction (e.g. Bateman and Strasser 1984), others have found that job satisfaction is an antecedent of organisational commitment (e.g. Brashear et al. 2003; Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996). Despite the argument on the direction of causality, this relationship has proved to be strong and positive (Bateman and Strasser 1984; Johnston et al. 1990). Ultimately, Brown and Peterson (1993) conclude that the predominant effect is of job satisfaction on organisational commitment, rather than vice versa. Therefore, within the conceptual framework of the present research, the direction of the relationship will be hypothesised as such.

In relation to individual characteristics (e.g. organisational tenure, age, education, and sales experience), Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1976) have shown that *position tenure* is negatively related to the following three components of job satisfaction: the job itself, pay and promotion and advancement. Bateman and Strasser (1984) have found a non-significant relationship between *job tenure* and satisfaction and a

positive link between *career tenure* and satisfaction in time 2. It is argued that *age* has a non-linear relationship with job satisfaction (Cron and Slocum 1986). A positive correlation between age and job satisfaction has been found for time 2, but not for time 1 (Bateman and Strasser 1984). In relation to *education*, a positive link between education and job satisfaction has been reported for time 1 but a non-significant correlation has been found for time 2 (Bateman and Strasser 1984). Teas (1983) demonstrated that *selling experience* had a significant positive association with a salesperson's job satisfaction.

In sum, the previous section provides an inclusive literature review of job satisfaction by focusing on issues such as its definition, measurement, antecedents, consequences and correlates.

3.2.2 Organisational Commitment

In this section, the researcher presents two alternative theoretical perspectives on the growth of organisational commitment and clarifies the one employed in this study. Next, a review of its antecedents, which may be grouped into five key categories, namely personal characteristics, role stressors, job characteristics, group-leader relations and organisational characteristics, is presented. Subsequent to the antecedents, the consequences of organisational commitment are discussed. These include job performance, attendance, lateness, perceived job alternatives, intention to search, intention to leave, and turnover. The section ends with a review of the literature on the correlates of organisational commitment.

Organisational commitment is a concept that has been studied extensively in organisational psychology and within the organisational behavior literatures. It has also been defined and measured in several different ways (e.g. Hrebiniak and Alutto 1972; O'Reilly and Caldwell 1980; Porter et al. 1974; Bateman and Strasser 1984). Several of these definitions and measures have a common ground: organisational commitment is regarded as a bond between the individual and his/her organisation (Mathieu and Zajac 1990).

There are two different, though related, theoretical perspectives regarding the growth of organisational commitment (Blau and Boal 1987). Despite being distinct, both standpoints reflect the idea of the individual's attachment to the organisation (Johnston et al. 1990). In one of the perspectives, commitment is regarded mostly as a function of individual *behavior*. From another point of view, commitment is viewed as a dynamic, positive *attitude* to the organisation (Johnston et al. 1990). In measurement terms, the first form of commitment – *behavior* – appears to be mostly associated with the calculative commitment scale by Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) while the second form of commitment – *attitude* – often seems to be represented by the attitudinal commitment construct by Porter et al. (1974). The most frequently studied type of organisational commitment is attitudinal organisational commitment. Porter and colleagues argue that attitudinal organisational commitment reveals the strength of an individual's identification with and contribution to a particular organisation. Conceptually, it can be characterised by three dimensions: a) a belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of the organisation; b) a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organisation; and c) a strong desire to continue as a member of the organisation

(Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979).

The focus of the present research is on attitudinal organisational commitment. Therefore, the researcher employs one of the most widely established measures: Porter and colleagues' (Porter et al. 1974; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979) operationalisation. They developed a 15-item questionnaire (Organisational Commitment Questionnaire) in order to assess the degree to which individuals are committed to their organisation. The measure presented a good internal consistency, as measured by cronbach alpha (Cronbach 1951).

Thus far, organisational commitment has been discussed as a general concept/construct. Nevertheless, it is necessary to acknowledge that organisational commitment may be both a general or a multifaceted construct (Reichers 1986). As a multifaceted concept, it comprises a set of multiple commitments to different groups constituting the organisation, namely co-workers, top managers, clients/customers, professional associations, union and the community (Reichers 1985, 1986). This multiple commitment approach is not the focus of this research. For a more detailed discussion, see Reichers' (1985, 1986) work.

3.2.2.1 Antecedents of Organisational Commitment

Personal characteristics, role stressors, job characteristics, group-leader relations and organisational characteristics have regularly been regarded as antecedents of commitment (Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982; Steers 1977).

Personal characteristics comprise the “variables which define the individual” (Steers 1977, p. 47). Within the personal characteristics dimension, Mathieu and Zajac’s (1990) review and meta-analysis found that:

- 1) *age* had a medium positive correlation with organisational commitment;
- 2) *gender* presented a small correlation with organisational commitment (being women more committed than men);
- 3) *education* displayed a small negative correlation with organisational commitment;
- 4) *marital status* showed a small but positive relationship with organisational commitment;
- 5) *position tenure* and *organisational tenure* showed a small correlation with organisational commitment. Nevertheless, organisational tenure had a stronger relationship with organisational commitment than position tenure;
- 6) *perceived competence* demonstrated a large, positive correlation with organisational commitment;
- 7) *salary* and *job level* presented a low positive correlation with organisational commitment;
- 8) *protestant work ethic* (i.e., hard work is inherently good) had a moderately positive correlation with organisational commitment;

Another variable incorporated into the personal characteristics’ group is that of *customer orientation* (Donavan, Brown, and Mowen 2004). The authors found that customer orientation positively affects organisational commitment.

Role stressors are considered to be direct antecedents of organisational commitment in the role theory and job stress literatures (Brown and Peterson 1993;

Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). More specifically, Brown and Peterson (1993) propose a negative impact of *role conflict* on organisational commitment. While some researchers have proved this negative link (e.g. Singh 1998; Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Reichers 1986), others (e.g. Johnston et al. 1990; Babakus et al. 1999) found a non-significant direct effect of role conflict on organisational commitment. Nevertheless, a significant indirect effect of role conflict on commitment - through role ambiguity and job satisfaction- has been confirmed (Johnston et al. 1990).

In relation to *role ambiguity*, there are also mixed findings. It has been demonstrated that an increase in role ambiguity leads to a decrease in organisational commitment in the early employment stage (Johnston et al. 1990). Nevertheless, Singh (1998) and Brown and Peterson (1993) did not confirm this negative relationship. They found a non-significant link between role ambiguity and organisational commitment. Rhoads, Singh, and Goodell (1994) analysed two forms of role ambiguity: internal and external. They found that internal role ambiguity (within the company: boss, other managers, co-workers, etc) is a predictor of salespeople's organisational commitment but that external role ambiguity (external to the company: family, customer, etc) is not.

In addition to role conflict and role ambiguity, another role stressor discussed frequently in the literature is that of *role overload*. For role overload, too, the findings are miscellaneous. Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) meta-analysis results have shown a moderate negative correlation between role overload and organisational commitment. On the contrary, Singh (1998) reported a positive link between role overload and organisational commitment, suggesting that salespeople with high levels of overload tend to be more committed to the organisation.

A variable closely related to the role stressors category is that of leadership role clarification. Johnston et al. (1990) found, that contrary to what they have hypothesised, salespeople's perceptions of leadership role clarification did not have a direct impact on organisational commitment. Instead, they found an indirect path through role ambiguity and job satisfaction.

Skill variety, task autonomy, job challenge and job scope were included in the **job characteristics** group (Mathieu and Zajac 1990). Skill variety, task autonomy, job challenge and job scope all exhibited a positive correlation with organisational commitment. *Skill variety* showed a medium correlation with organisational commitment, whereas *task autonomy* had a small correlation with organisational commitment. *Job scope* had a strong correlation with organisational commitment, and was higher than organisational commitment's correlation with *job challenge*. Additional variables that may be incorporated in the job characteristics' group are feedback, task variety and participation (Singh 1998). Singh (1998) found that both *task variety* and *participation* positively predicted organisational commitment. Nevertheless, he reported a non-significant relationship between *feedback* and organisational commitment.

Within the category of **group-leader relations**, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) have included *task interdependence*, *leader initiating structure*, *leader consideration*, *leader communication*, and *participative leadership*. All of these variables were found to be positively correlated with organisational commitment. More specifically, all the variables presented a medium correlation with organisational

commitment, except for leader communication, which demonstrated a large correlation with organisational commitment (Mathieu and Zajac 1990).

The results of Johnston et al. (1990) regarding leader consideration were divergent from Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) results. Johnston et al. (1990) found that, contrary to what they hypothesised, salespeople's perceptions of leadership consideration did not have a direct impact on organisational commitment. Instead, it had an indirect impact, through role stressors and job satisfaction.

In terms of **organisational characteristics**, *organisational size* (i.e., the total number of organisational members) and *organisational centralisation* have been considered. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) report a non-association between both organisational size and organisational centralisation, and organisational commitment.

An additional variable that may be included in this group is *perceived organisational support*. Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996) have found a strong positive impact of perceived organisational support on organisational commitment. Moreover, perceived organisational support has been found to be positively related to temporal changes in affective commitment, which suggests that perceived organisational support precedes affective commitment (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001).

Other variables that have not been discussed in Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) meta-analysis, but that nonetheless deserve consideration, are burnout/emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction and sales performance.

Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994) have demonstrated that burnout has a large negative impact on psychological job outcomes, namely organisational commitment. Also Babakus et al. (1999) report a negative impact of *emotional exhaustion* on organisational commitment.

Job satisfaction was shown to have a positive impact on organisational commitment (Babakus et al. 1999; Reichers 1986). In a sales context, Johnston et al. (1990) discovered that increased levels of job satisfaction led to an improvement in salespeople's commitment in the early employment stage.

Brown and Peterson (1993), meanwhile, have claimed that earlier research has been contradictory regarding the impact of *sales performance* on organisational commitment. In their specific study, they have found that the impact of sales performance on organisational commitment, though statistically significant, was weak and lacked substantive significance.

3.2.2.2 Consequences of Organisational Commitment

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) consider behavioural intentions and actual behaviours as being consequences of organisational commitment. Thus, their meta-analysis investigated variables such as job performance, perceived job alternatives, intention to search, intention to leave, attendance, lateness and turnover.

A weak relationship between **job performance** and organisational commitment was found (Mathieu and Zajac 1990). Therefore, the authors concluded that commitment has little direct impact on performance.

In terms of withdrawal behaviour, small correlations with organisational commitment were found for both **attendance** and **lateness**. Organisational commitment had a positive relationship with attendance and a negative one with lateness (Mathieu and Zajac 1990).

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found a minimal relationship between organisational commitment and employees' **perceptions of job alternatives**.

With regard to the two turnover intentions, namely **intention to search** for job alternatives and **intention to leave** the job, a strong negative relationship with organisational commitment was reported (Mathieu and Zajac 1990).

Indeed, previous research has shown that organisational commitment impacts negatively on intention to leave (Sager 1994; Babakus et al. 1999). In other words, the development of organisational commitment decreases salespeople's propensity to leave (Johnston et al. 1990). Since propensity to leave is a behavioural intention that precedes **turnover**, turnover was proven to be an indirect consequence of organisational commitment (Johnston et al. 1990). Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found a negative, moderate correlation between organisational commitment and turnover. Previously, Porter et al.'s (1974) longitudinal study had concluded that an individual's favourable attitudes over time (in this case organisational commitment)

is inversely related to turnover: that is, this negative association is stronger as individuals approach the stage of leaving the organisation.

3.2.2.3 Correlates of Organisational Commitment

Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) meta-analysis considered two broad groups of correlates of organisational commitment: motivation and job satisfaction. Motivation included variables such as overall and internal motivation, job involvement, stress, occupational commitment and union commitment. The second group comprised overall job satisfaction and intrinsic, extrinsic, supervision, co-workers, promotions, pay and work job satisfaction.

With regard to **motivation**, the authors demonstrated that *overall motivation*, *internal motivation* as well as *job involvement* exhibited a large correlation with organisational commitment. *Stress* was found to have a moderately negative relationship with organisational commitment. *Occupational commitment*, defined as individual's attachment to a specific occupation or profession, had a moderate positive correlation with organisational commitment. Finally, *union commitment* showed a small positive correlation with organisational commitment.

The relationship of **job satisfaction** and its dimensions with organisational commitment is one of the most studied topics in the organisational commitment literature (Mathieu and Zajac 1990). Despite being related, the constructs of organisational commitment and job satisfaction are distinct (Porter et al. 1974). Past research has reported a positive relationship between organisational commitment

and job satisfaction (Johnston et al. 1990). In their meta-analysis results, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found large correlations with organisational commitment for *overall* job satisfaction and satisfaction with *work itself*, and a small correlation for *extrinsic* job satisfaction. For other components of job satisfaction, namely *intrinsic*, *supervision*, *co-workers*, *promotions* and *pay*, the correlations with organisational commitment ranged from 0.323 to 0.409. It is important to note that there is a lack of agreement regarding the causal relationship between these two constructs. Based on Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis, the direction of causality with stronger conceptual and empirical support is from job satisfaction to organisational commitment. This direction of causality is the one proposed in this study's conceptual model. Therefore, the researcher has also discussed job satisfaction in the section concerning the antecedents of organisational commitment.

In the preceding section, a comprehensive literature review of the organisational commitment concept was provided. Consistent with the section on job satisfaction, the definition of organisational commitment, as well as its measurement, antecedents, consequences and correlates were discussed.

3.2.3 Emotional Exhaustion

This section presents a literature review of the third psychological job outcome, i.e., emotional exhaustion. A review of its antecedents, namely role stressors, work-family conflict and unpleasant supervisor contact, is provided. Next, the consequences of emotional exhaustion are discussed. These include job

performance, sales performance, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, propensity to leave and depersonalisation. Finally, a review of the literature on the correlates of emotional exhaustion is presented.

Burnout may be regarded as a “syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind” (Maslach and Jackson 1981, p. 99).

Boundary spanners, namely frontline service employees, are particularly vulnerable to burnout (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994) since they “are caught in a difficult position when they perceive that client demands cannot or will not be met by the organization” (Cordes and Dougherty 1993, p. 644).

Many researchers have argued that burnout consists of three distinct but interrelated symptoms or components: 1) emotional exhaustion; 2) depersonalisation of others; and 3) reduced personal accomplishment (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994; Maslach and Jackson 1981; Maslach 1982). Babakus et al. (1999) emphasise the importance of analysing the effects of each individual dimension of burnout on job-related behaviours and not only the impact of the overall burnout construct. Additionally, emotional exhaustion is considered to be the first step in a burnout experience (Cordes and Dougherty 1993) and a key dimension in the burnout process (Maslach 1982; Gaines and Jermier 1983; Babakus et al. 1999). Finally, despite being examined in two studies in a sales environment (see Boles, Johnston, and Hair 1997; Babakus et al. 1999) and in one study in a bank context (see Karatepe 2006), emotional exhaustion has not been analysed in a sample of

restaurant frontline employees. This research extends the findings regarding emotional exhaustion with salespeople to a service employee context. The aforementioned reasons justify the focus of this research on emotional exhaustion.

Emotional exhaustion is characterised by a feeling of lack of energy and a sensation of being drained due to extreme psychological demands (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994; Babakus et al. 1999). The individual has a feeling “of being emotionally overextended” (Leiter and Maslach 1988, p. 297). Emotional exhaustion arises mainly in intensive and people-oriented jobs in which there are emotional personal interactions (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). Cordes and Dougherty (1993) corroborate this idea by arguing that boundary spanners will be subject to higher levels of emotional exhaustion than non-boundary spanners. Therefore, since service frontline employees are in boundary spanning positions, they are particularly exposed to emotional exhaustion.

3.2.3.1 Antecedents of Emotional Exhaustion

Role stressors, namely role ambiguity, role conflict and *role overload*, have a significant, positive impact on burnout (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994).

More specifically, with regard to emotional exhaustion, *role conflict* (Leiter and Maslach 1988; Lee and Ashforth 1996; Boles, Johnston, and Hair 1997; Babakus et al. 1999) as well as *role ambiguity* (Babakus et al. 1999) have a significant, positive effect on emotional exhaustion. Nevertheless, in a sales context, Boles, Johnston, and Hair (1997) have not found a significant impact of role ambiguity on emotional exhaustion.

Other variables that have been studied as antecedents of emotional exhaustion are work-family conflict and the unpleasant behaviour of both a co-worker and the supervisor.

A positive impact of **work-family conflict** on emotional exhaustion has been found (Boles, Johnston, and Hair 1997). In addition, Leiter and Maslach (1988) suggested that unpleasant co-worker contact and unpleasant supervisor contact are antecedents of emotional exhaustion. Nevertheless, they have confirmed this relationship only for **unpleasant supervisor contact**, which was found to have a positive effect on emotional exhaustion. A non-significant impact of **unpleasant co-worker contact** on emotional exhaustion was reported.

3.2.3.2 Consequences of Emotional Exhaustion

Burnout has a significant, negative and direct impact on behavioural outcomes, such as **job performance** since the boundary spanner's energy is reduced and therefore his/her effort at work diminishes (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). It also has a large, negative effect on psychological job outcomes, namely **job satisfaction** and **organisational commitment** (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). In particular, emotionally exhausted individuals tend to be less committed to the organisation (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994; Leiter and Maslach 1988). Babakus et al. (1999) have found a significant negative impact of emotional exhaustion on organisational commitment. They have also demonstrated that emotional exhaustion has a significant negative impact on job satisfaction. In contrast, Boles, Johnston, and Hair's (1997) results do not confirm Babakus et al.'s

(1999) findings regarding the job satisfaction variable. They have, rather, reported a non-significant impact of emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction.

Other variables that have been studied as outcomes of emotional exhaustion are those of sales performance, propensity to leave and depersonalisation. A non-significant effect of emotional exhaustion on **salesperson performance** has been shown (Babakus et al. 1999). In relation to propensity to leave, Boles, Johnston, and Hair (1997) provide evidence of a positive impact of emotional exhaustion on **propensity to leave**. Finally, a positive relationship was found between emotional exhaustion and **depersonalisation** (i.e., unsympathetic and callous response toward other people) (Leiter and Maslach 1988).

3.2.3.3 Correlates of Emotional Exhaustion

Lee and Ashforth (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of the correlates of emotional exhaustion. All the variables included in their study will be discussed next, except for those that have already been included in the sections on the antecedents or consequences of emotional exhaustion.

Lee and Ashforth (1996) considered five broad groups of variables: job stressors, support, job enhancement opportunities, reinforcement contingencies and behavioural and attitudinal outcomes.

Within the **job stressors** category, a non-significant relationship with emotional exhaustion was found for role stress and work pressure. A positive link with emotional exhaustion was reported for stressful events and workload.

In the **support** group most of the relationships were negative, with the exception of two that were non-significant. A significant, negative link was discovered for social support, supervisor support, co-worker support, work friends and peer cohesion. Non-significant correlations were found for family resources and team cohesion.

Within the **job enhancement opportunities** grouping, only one variable, that of autonomy, had a positive correlation with emotional exhaustion. The remaining variables, i.e., innovation, participation, skill utilisation and task orientation have a non-significant correlation with emotional exhaustion.

Within the **reinforcement contingencies** set of variables, unmet expectations were found to have a positive relationship with emotional exhaustion.

The last group is that of **behavioural and attitudinal outcomes**. A positive, significant correlation with emotional exhaustion was found for turnover intentions and job involvement.

In conclusion, most research to date is on the burnout construct. The research on emotional exhaustion is scant. With the exception of three studies that have examined emotional exhaustion of boundary spanners, in particular salespeople (Boles, Johnston, and Hair 1997; Babakus et al. 1999) and frontline bank

employees (Karatepe 2006), there are no other studies of significance. This research will fill the gap by testing the construct in another boundary spanners' context, namely frontline employees in restaurants. Additionally, the relationship between learning goal orientation and emotional exhaustion, which has not been investigated previously, will be tested here.

Section 3.2 presents the literature review on psychological job outcomes, namely job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion. The literature review of these three concepts comprises their definition, measurement, antecedents, consequences and correlates. Two of the psychological job outcomes, in particular job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion, are incorporated into the conceptual framework as consequences of learning goal orientation.

3.3 Perceived Organisational Support

In the previous section, a review of the literature on two of the outcomes of learning goal orientation (i.e., job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion) was provided.

In this section, a literature review of perceived organisational support is presented. This concept is included in the conceptual framework as an antecedent of learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes. Topics such as perceived organisational support's definition, measurement, antecedents, consequences and its moderating role are reviewed.

By 2002, over 70 empirical studies have investigated perceived organisational support (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Perceived organisational support may be defined as employees' general beliefs that their organisation values their contributions and cares about their welfare (Eisenberger et al. 1986).

The perceived organisational support concept is strongly connected to organisational commitment. While organisational commitment is related to employee's attachment to the organisation (Johnston et al. 1990), perceived organisational support can be regarded as an organisation's attachment to the employee. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) argue that the organisational support theory assumes that employees incarnate the organisation and assess the extent to which the organisation values their contributions and concerns about their well-being. They reciprocate this perceived organisational support with superior commitment and loyalty to the organisation, as well as greater performance. Based on these assumptions, the organisational support theory is an application of the

reciprocity norm to employee-employer relationship (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). The rule of reciprocity permits both employers and employees to combine these two different orientations (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002).

3.3.1 Antecedents of Perceived Organisational Support

Based on organisational support theory (Eisenberger et al. 1986), there are three modes of an organisation's favourable treatment of its employees: 1) fairness; 2) supervisor support; and 3) rewards and job conditions (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) meta-analysis results show that **fair treatment** has the strongest positive relationship with perceived organisational support, followed by **supervisor support** as being the second greatest link, and finally, favourable **rewards** and **job conditions**, with the weakest positive relationship. More specifically, the subcategories of fairness, namely *procedural justice* and *perceived organisational politics*, strongly affect perceived organisational support. Procedural justice has a positive relationship (see also Moorman, Blakely, and Niehoff 1998), whereas perceived organisational politics has a negative relation with perceived organisational support. Additionally, in relation to organisational rewards and job conditions, their meta-analysis' results demonstrate that *pay*, *promotion*, *role stressors*, *job security* and *autonomy* have strong positive relationships with perceived organisational support, whereas *training* and *organisational size* have a moderate link with perceived organisational support.

Moreover, Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli (2001) have shown that three variables related to work experiences, namely organisational rewards, procedural justice, and supervisor support, are antecedents of perceived organisational support.

In relation to **employee characteristics**, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) considered two sub-groups: 1) *personality*, which includes positive affectivity, negative affectivity and conscientiousness; and 2) *demographic characteristics*, in particular age, education, gender and tenure. They found a strong negative relationship between negative affectivity and perceived organisational support, a strong positive link between positive affectivity and perceived organisational support, and ultimately a small positive relationship between conscientiousness and perceived organisational support. With regard to demographic characteristics such as age, education, gender and tenure, all of them show a very small relationship with perceived organisational support.

3.3.2 Consequences of Perceived Organisational Support

Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) meta-analysis concluded that:

- a. *Job-related affect*, namely job satisfaction and positive mood at work, showed a large relation with perceived organisational support;
- b. *Job involvement* presented a moderate, positive relationship with perceived organisational support;
- c. *Strains* revealed a moderate negative relationship with perceived organisational support;
- d. *Desire to remain with the organisation* showed a large, positive link with

perceived organisational support;

- e. Perceived organisational support had a large, positive relationship with *organisational commitment*. More specifically, a strong, positive link between perceived organisational support and affective commitment and a small, negative relationship of perceived organisational support with continuance commitment were reported;
- f. *Overall withdrawal behaviour* had a moderate negative link with perceived organisational support. In particular, perceived organisational support revealed the strongest relationship with turnover intentions, followed by withdrawal behaviours short of turnover (e.g., absenteeism and tardiness) and finally, actual turnover.
- g. With regard to *performance*, a medium positive relationship was found for extra-role performance directed toward the organisation and a small one for in-role performance;

Other studies (e.g. Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001; Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990) have demonstrated that perceived organisational support is positively related to changes over time in *affective commitment*. Eisenberger et al. (2001) have also confirmed that perceived organisational support has a positive direct impact on *positive mood* and a negative one on *withdrawal behaviour*.

With regard to *extra-role performance*, several authors (e.g. Masterson et al. 2000; Moorman, Blakely, and Niehoff 1998; Wayne, Shore, and Liden 1997) have confirmed that organisational citizenship behaviour is a positive consequence of perceived organisational support. In their research, Moorman, Blakely, and Niehoff

(1998) have considered four forms of extra-role behaviour: interpersonal helping, individual initiative, personal industry, and loyal boosterism, whereas Masterson et al. (2000) have focused exclusively on organisation-directed OCB (i.e., civic virtue). In a recent study, Piercy et al. (2006) have proved that perceived organisational support has a strong impact on a salesperson's organisational citizenship behaviours. The authors argue that this reflects reciprocity in a social exchange, since the salesperson who perceives organisational support is more prone to reciprocate by giving higher levels of OCB.

Perceived organisational support exhibits a highly negative correlation with employee absenteeism, namely periods and days of absenteeism, and a positive relationship with job performance (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990). This way perceived organisational support was found to be positively related to conscientiousness in performing standard job responsibilities, assessed by attendance and performance measures. They also found that perceived organisational support was positively related to a) affective attachment and calculative involvement in the organisation; and b) employee innovation - measured by the constructiveness of employee suggestions to help the organisation- in the absence of an expected reward or personal recognition.

Employees with high perceived organisational support have higher *performance-reward expectancies*, namely that high effort will be translated into material rewards – i.e., pay and promotion - as well as social rewards such as approval and recognition (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990). Perceived organisational support exhibits a positive impact on the quality of

employee/supervisor relationships (i.e., leader-member exchange) (Masterson et al. 2000).

Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli (2001) reported a negative impact of perceived organisational support on subsequent employee turnover which was **mediated** by *affective commitment*. In other words, perceived organisational support by employees increases their affective commitment which, in turn, reduces turnover. Eisenberger et al. (2001) showed that the positive effect of perceived organisational support on organisational spontaneity and affective commitment was mediated by *positive mood*. Based on the reciprocity norm, employees' perceptions of an organisation's commitment to them (perceived organisational support) has a positive impact on the obligation felt by employees to care about the organisation's well-being and to help to achieve an organisation's goals (Eisenberger et al. 2001). Consequently, the authors have provided empirical evidence that *felt obligation* mediates the positive relationships of perceived organisational support with affective commitment, in-role performance and organisational spontaneity.

In terms of **moderating effects**, employees with a *high exchange ideology*³ have shown a stronger positive relationship of perceived organisational support with felt obligation to the organisation (Eisenberger et al. 2001). The moderation of the perceived organisational support-felt obligation link by exchange ideology is in line with organisational support's theoretical assumption that perceived organisational support strengthens affective attachment to the organisation and performance via

³ Exchange ideology is related to employees' beliefs about the appropriateness of helping the organisation achieve its objectives in return for favourable treatment (Eisenberger et al. 2001).

the reciprocity norm (Eisenberger et al. 1986; Eisenberger et al. 2001). Eisenberger et al. (1986) also found that employees with higher exchange ideologies exhibited a stronger relationship between perceived organisational support and absenteeism.

Eisenberger et al. (2002) have reported that the relationship between perception of supervisor support and perceived organisational support is superior for retail sales employees who perceive that their *supervisors* have high *status in the organisation*.

3.3.3 Moderating Role of Perceived Organisational Support

Lynch, Eisenberger, and Armeli (1999) have analysed the moderating role of perceived organisational support on the relationship from *reciprocation wariness* – employees’ fear of exploitation in interpersonal relationships with the employer – and their *in-role* and *extra-role performance*. They have found that for employees with low perceived organisational support, reciprocation wariness was negatively related to both in-role and extra-role job performance. In contrast, among employees with high perceived organisational support, reciprocation wariness is positively related to extra-role and in-role job performance for retail employees, and positively related to extra-role, and not related to in-role, for the multicompany sample.

3.3.4 Measurement of Perceived Organisational Support

Most studies of perceived organisational support use either the original 36-item scale of the Survey of Perceived Organisational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger et al. 1986) or a short form of it with 9-item (e.g. Piercy et al. 2006), 8-item (e.g. Eisenberger et al. 1997; Lynch, Eisenberger, and Armeli 1999), 7-item (e.g. Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001) or 5-item (e.g. Masterson et al. 2000). In the original 36-item scale, respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with each statement on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree). Half of the items were positively worded and the other half were negatively worded in order to control for response bias. The original scale has proved to have a high internal reliability and unidimensionality (Eisenberger et al. 1986; Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990). Therefore, using shorter versions is not problematical (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). The use of the short form is justified most of the time for practical reasons, namely the need to reduce questionnaire length (Masterson et al. 2000).

In section 3.3, a review of the literature on perceived organisational support was presented. Issues such as perceived organisational support's definition, measurement, antecedents, and consequences as well as its moderating role, were discussed. Perceived organisational support is a key concept since it is integrated into the conceptual framework as an antecedent of both learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes.

3.4 Summary

In this chapter, the literature on psychological job outcomes and perceived organisational support was reviewed. Both concepts are incorporated into the conceptual framework as consequences and antecedent of learning goal orientation respectively. In addition, based on the literature review, perceived organisational support is also included in the conceptual framework as an antecedent of psychological job outcomes. The next chapter presents the final part of the literature review of this thesis. It focuses on the concept and measurement, as well as the antecedents and consequences of service recovery performance, the ultimate dependent variable of this study.

4 SERVICE RECOVERY

One of the main challenges that service firms face is maintaining service standards. Since service industries are human-intensive in nature (Berry 1980) and are characterised by the simultaneity of production and consumption (Rust and Chung 2006), it is impossible to guarantee “zero defects” (Hart, Heskett, and Sasser 1990). In other words, it is somewhat likely that there will be failures in service delivery. Service recovery follows failures in service delivery. Indeed, service recovery performance is the final dependent variable of this study.

In this chapter, a review of the literature comprising the definition and measurement of service recovery performance is presented. Additionally, its antecedents, which may be divided into managerial attitudes and employees’ work environment perceptions, are discussed. Finally, the consequences of service recovery performance for both consumers and frontline employees are presented. Service recovery performance is included in the conceptual framework as a consequence of both learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes.

4.1 Introduction

Theoretical and empirical studies on service recovery are scarce (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). As a result, service recovery has been identified as a neglected area

which requires further scholarly research (McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998; Brown, Fisk, and Bitner 1994).

From a practitioners' viewpoint, there is a call for firms to pay considerably more attention to recovery (Tax and Brown 1998) since they are not knowledgeable about dealing successfully with service failures or the consequences of complaint handling strategies (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). Nevertheless, service marketing executives are faced with a problem: they have few empirical guidelines to help them to introduce recovery strategies (Boshoff and Allen 2000). Consequently, although service recovery is acknowledged by both service researchers (e.g. Tax and Brown 1998; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998) and managers as a cornerstone of a customer service strategy (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999), limited knowledge exists regarding the way customers assess recovery efforts, what is successful recovery, and the advantages - and limitations - of transforming customer dissatisfaction into satisfaction (McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000). Furthermore, little is known regarding the factors which have an impact on the service recovery performance of frontline employees (Boshoff and Allen 2000). This research contributes to the service recovery literature by attempting to fill this particular void. There are three underlying reasons for focusing on service recovery performance from the frontline employees' perspective. First, most research to date has studied service recovery from the consumers' perspective (e.g. Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999; Tax and Brown 1998; Kelley, Hoffman, and Davis 1993). Second, the key role played by frontline employees in service recovery has been widely acknowledged (Boshoff and Allen 2000; Boshoff 1997) due to the fact that very often they are the ones receiving the

complaints. In fact, Tax, Brown and Chandrashekar (1998) have shown that 65% of the complaints were first made to the frontline staff. As a result, effective service recovery is influenced to a large extent by the efficiency of frontline employees, to whom the customer complains (Tax and Brown 1998). Third, although the role of frontline employees is recognised as being crucial to service recovery, frontline staff's service recovery function is rarely implemented properly (Boshoff 1997).

The present research is aimed at gaining a better understanding of how employees evaluate their own service recovery performance in order to fill the aforementioned gaps.

Ultimately, service recovery deserves further investigation since the impact of service recovery on an organisation's profitability/revenue is enormous (Tax and Brown 1998).

4.2 Background

"To err is human; to recover divine" (Hart, Heskett, and Sasser 1990, p. 156)

Service recovery performance follows failures in service delivery. The focus of this research is on failures that are reported directly by the customer to the firm because only in this case does the firm have the opportunity to perform an efficient service recovery (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998).

Various services are human-intensive in nature, and this results in heterogeneous outcomes when compared to the machinery production processes (Berry 1980). In a labour-intensive service context, it is much more likely that there are failures in service delivery. Also, the fact that services are simultaneously produced and consumed and that there is co-production (Berry 1980), makes it impossible to guarantee a 100% error-free service (Brown, Fisk, and Bitner 1994). In other words, in services, it is impossible to guarantee “zero defects” (Hart, Heskett, and Sasser 1990).

The initial aim should be to identify and remove all probable sources of failure (McColl-Kennedy, Daus, and Sparks 2003) in order to minimise service failures. However, once these failures occur, it is crucial to provide a strong and effective service recovery, since customers respond strongly to service failures (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999) and are frequently more dissatisfied with the inability of the organisation to recover than with the service failure itself (Berry and Parasuraman 1991; Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990). Therefore, service marketers are urged to understand how to guarantee an efficient recovery following failure, in order to minimise customer dissatisfaction (Hess, Ganesan, and Klein 2003). As previous research has shown, inappropriate service recovery (e.g. failure to apologise, offer to compensate, or provide an explanation) is often associated with very unsatisfactory service experiences for almost half of the respondents (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990). In fact, over half of customers have stronger negative feeling towards the company after the service complaint (Hart, Heskett, and Sasser 1990). The attempt to recover from the failure resulted in a failure escalation (Kelley, Hoffman, and Davis 1993). The customer becomes even more

dissatisfied with the organisation as it fails not only when providing the service but also in the recovery process (McColl-Kennedy, Daus, and Sparks 2003). Bitner, Booms and Tetreault (1990) name the aforementioned a *double deviation* from customer expectations on service providers' role.

In contrast, when recovery comprises a tangible compensation (e.g. upgrade to a better room, offer of a free flight ticket, or a free meal/drink, etc) customers are usually highly satisfied, despite the initial service failure (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990). Also Hart, Heskett and Sasser (1990) argue that a superior recovery process can transform dissatisfied customers into customers with more goodwill towards the service provider. The authors propose and discuss several measures for guaranteeing successful recoveries. These include: a) measure the costs; b) break the silence; c) anticipate needs for recovery; d) act fast; e) train employees; f) empower the frontline, and g) close the loop (for a detailed explanation see original study).

Within the context of effective recoveries, the “service recovery paradox” emerged. The underlying argument is that the customer evaluates the encounter with the service provider more satisfactorily after the failure has been corrected than if the failure had never existed (Etzel and Silverman 1981; McCollough and Bharadwaj 1992). In other words, the service recovery paradox suggests that post-recovery satisfaction is higher than pre-failure satisfaction (Weun, Beatty, and Jones 2004). The service recovery paradox is characterised by mixed findings which may be justified by the need to take into account the severity of the service failure (Weun, Beatty, and Jones 2004). The authors suggest that the service recovery paradox may

hold only for minor failures that are resolved extremely well, but not for more severe failures.

In conclusion, due to the fact that higher service recovery may be an opportunity to enhance customer satisfaction, customer loyalty as well as to establish long-term customer relationships (McColl-Kennedy, Daus, and Sparks 2003; Kelley, Hoffman, and Davis 1993; Hart, Heskett, and Sasser 1990), it is crucial to assure an efficient recovery.

4.3 The Concept and Measurement

Service recovery comprises a set of actions carried out by the service organisation and its employees in order to recompense a customer for the losses incurred with a service failure (Gronroos 1988). Among these actions are economic resources in the form of compensation (e.g., refunds/reimbursements, price discounts, free products or services, upgraded services) or social resources (e.g., apologies, acknowledgement of the problem, management intervention) (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999; Kelley, Hoffman, and Davis 1993). The equivalent conceptualisation by Weun, Beatty, and Jones's (2004) is based on two concepts: a) service recovery outcome, i.e., a tangible outcome, and b) service recovery process, i.e., the way a service provider deals with a failure throughout the recovery process.

An alternative to Gronroos' (1988) definition of service recovery is that of Smith, Bolton, and Wagner (1999) in which service recovery is regarded as a "bundle of resources" employed by the service organisation in reaction to a failure. In line with

the abovementioned research, recovery performance is investigated in this study as a reactive recovery situation, in which the customer's complaint instigates the recovery action (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). More specifically, it is assumed that a failure takes place in the service delivery system. This failure occurs in the core-service of the restaurant, i.e., the meal service. There are three possible sources of failure in the service delivery: 1) unavailability (e.g. the specific table reserved on the phone is not available), 2) unjustifiable slowness (e.g. a two hours wait for a meal), and 3) other aspects of the core service besides unavailability and slowness (e.g. the meal is cold) (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990). Assuming a reactive recovery situation (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999), employees have to reply efficiently to customer complaints.

In this research, service recovery performance is defined as the individual frontline service employee's perceptions of his/her own skills and actions, whilst resolving a service failure to guarantee customer's satisfaction (Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000).

To the best of the researcher's knowledge there is only one measure of service recovery performance from the frontline employees' viewpoint. This is the one developed by Boshoff and Allen (2000) comprising 6-items, which is based on Behrman and Perrault's (1984) work. In line with previous research (e.g. Babakus et al. 2003; Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005), this scale is incorporated in my study.

4.4 Antecedents of Service Recovery Performance

The antecedents of service recovery can be divided into two groups: managerial attitudes within the organisation and frontline employees' perceptions of their work environment (Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005; Boshoff and Allen 2000). Managerial attitudes comprise both customer service orientation and employees' rewards for providing customer service excellence. Work environment perceptions comprise training in customer service, empowerment, teamwork, role ambiguity and organisational commitment.

Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous (2005) found that none of the **managerial attitudes** show a significant relationship with service recovery performance in a public health-care setting. Boshoff and Allen (2000) have confirmed the same result for *customer service orientation*. Nevertheless, they proved the existence of a positive impact of *rewarding customer service excellence* on service recovery performance.

In a sample of frontline employees of a retail bank, another variable that may be included within the managerial attitudes group is management commitment to service quality (MCSQ). This variable has been found to have a positive indirect effect on service recovery performance through affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Babakus et al. 2003).

Among **work environment perceptions**, Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous (2005) have found that only *training* on providing *customer service* had a non-significant

relationship with service recovery performance. *Empowerment*, *teamwork* and *organisational commitment* positively affected service recovery performance, while *role ambiguity* had a negative impact. Karatepe (2006) confirmed the negative effect of role ambiguity on service recovery performance in a sample of frontline bank employees. Contrary to Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous (2005), Boshoff and Allen (2000) did not confirm the negative impact of role ambiguity and the positive effect of teamwork on service recovery performance. They found non-significant relationships for these two variables. Also Babakus et al. (2003) found a positive impact of affective organisational commitment on service recovery performance.

A variable that has not been analysed by Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous (2005) and Boshoff and Allen (2000) is *job satisfaction*. Nevertheless, in Babakus et al.'s (2003) research it has been investigated and a positive effect of job satisfaction on service recovery performance has been found.

Hoffman, Kelley, and Rotalsky (1995) suggest that future service recovery research should investigate employee-related antecedents such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment. With the exception of Babakus et al.'s (2003) study, there is no research analysing both variables simultaneously. In this investigation, the researcher addresses their call by including these two variables as antecedents of service recovery performance.

In addition to the variables included in the managerial attitudes and work environment perceptions' groups, Karatepe (2006) suggested two variables that

may be considered employees' **personal characteristics**. The author found that *trait competitiveness* and *intrinsic motivation* have a positive effect on the service recovery performance of frontline bank employees.

Finally, despite proposing a negative impact of *emotional exhaustion* on service recovery performance, Karatepe (2006) found a non-significant relationship.

In the following section, the consequences of service recovery performance for both consumers and frontline employees are discussed.

4.5 Consequences of Service Recovery Performance

4.5.1 For Consumers

The main theoretical framework associated with service recovery seems to be that of justice theory (Tax and Brown 2000 in Mattila 2001). It has been argued that the recovery effort is an antecedent to *customer evaluations of fairness* (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). Smith, Bolton, and Wagner (1999) show that different service recovery attributes (i.e., compensation, response speed, apology and recovery initiation) affect a customer's evaluations of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. More specifically, they have found that:

- a) Compensation has a positive impact on perceptions of distributive justice;
- b) A speedy recovery has a positive effect on perceptions of procedural justice;
- c) An apology has a positive impact on perceptions of interactional justice;
- d) An organisation-initiated recovery has a positive effect on interactional justice.

In terms of moderating effects, the magnitude of failure moderates the relationship between the service recovery effort and both interactional and distributive justice (Mattila 2001).

At this point, it is clear that customers evaluate service recovery by analysing both the outcome – i.e., “what is delivered”- and interpersonal treatment – i.e., “how it is delivered”- they are given throughout the process (Weun, Beatty, and Jones 2004, p. 134; Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). Consequently, effective service recovery – both in outcome and interpersonal treatment terms- guides positive customer attitudes and behaviours (Weun, Beatty, and Jones 2004).

Broadly speaking, a consequence of organisational recovery efforts is *customer satisfaction* with service performance after the recovery (Oliver 1980). In other words, the better the recovery performance, the higher the postrecovery satisfaction will be (McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000). In particular, McColl-Kennedy, Daus, and Sparks (2003) have demonstrated that the behaviour of the service providers, namely giving voice to the customer, apologising, showing concern or empathy, and offering compensation are positive predictors of customer

satisfaction. Also Hess, Ganesan, and Klein (2003) have found that the quality of recovery performance- i.e., the degree of compensation offered by the service provider after failure- has a strong positive correlation with consumers' satisfaction with service performance after recovery.

The way service recovery is handled further influences the *intention to return* to the company (McColl-Kennedy, Daus, and Sparks 2003). A successful recovery has a strong indirect positive impact on future purchase intentions and word of mouth, when mediated by overall satisfaction (Spreng, Harrell, and Mackoy 1995). Additional positive outcomes of effective problems' resolution are *customer loyalty* (Tax and Brown 1998) and *customer retention* (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). Finally, efficient service recovery leads to consumers' perceptions of superior *service quality* (Boshoff 1997).

In contrast, poor complaint handling negatively affects *customer commitment* and *trust* (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). This relationship is moderated by prior service experience. Furthermore, unsuccessful service recovery has been found to have a direct impact on *customer switching behaviour* in service industries (Keaveney 1995) as well as a negative indirect effect – through interactional justice - on *word-of-mouth intentions* (Blodgett, Hill, and Tax 1997).

Another theoretical framework for investigating consumer complaint behaviour is the disconfirmation paradigm (Boshoff 1997). According to this paradigm (Oliver 1980), customers compare perceived performance to expectations. There is a *positive disconfirmation* when performance surpasses expectations, *confirmation*

when performance equals expectations and a *negative disconfirmation* when expectations exceed performance. As a result, a positive consequence of good service recovery is positive disconfirmation (and vice-versa) (McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000).

4.5.2 For Frontline Employees

Previously, the researcher has discussed the consequences of service recovery for the consumer. Nevertheless, given that this study focuses on service recovery performance from the frontline employees' perspective, it is vital to understand the impact of service recovery on them. Research analysing the impact of service recovery on employees is considerably more limited than that into the effect on consumers. Next, the researcher discusses the findings from the few studies available.

Tax and Brown (1998) suggest that resolving customer problems, i.e., service recovery has a direct impact on *employee satisfaction*⁴ (and not only customer satisfaction). Boshoff and Allen (2000) and Karatepe (2006) have confirmed that efficient service recovery enhances frontline employees' job satisfaction. Nevertheless, Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous (2005) have found that service recovery performance has a non-significant effect on extrinsic job satisfaction. Moreover, intention to resign and intention to leave have been suggested as outcome variables (Boshoff and Allen 2000; Karatepe 2006). Two studies (Ashill,

⁴ Note that job satisfaction has been previously discussed in the section regarding the antecedents of service recovery performance.

Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005; Boshoff and Allen 2000) have empirically proved the negative impact of service recovery performance on *intention to resign* and Karatepe's (2006) research has shown a negative effect of service recovery performance on *intention to leave*.

4.6 Summary

It is key to understand the service recovery process, due to the crucial role that service recovery plays in enhancing customer and employee satisfaction, as well as firm performance and profitability (Tax and Brown 1998).

In this research, several gaps are being addressed:

1. Overall, service recovery is considered to be a neglected area which requires further scholarly research (McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998; Brown, Fisk, and Bitner 1994);
2. In particular, only three original studies, namely Boshoff and Allen (2000), Babakus et al. (2003) and Karatepe (2006), have analysed service recovery from frontline employees' perspective⁵;
3. It has been suggested that future service recovery research should investigate employee-related antecedents such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Hoffman, Kelley, and Rotalsky 1995);
4. Finally, the researcher shall respond to a call by Kelley, Hoffman, and Davis

⁵ Note that Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous' (2005) study is not included in this list since it is a replication of Boshoff and Allen's (2000) conceptual framework in another setting, i.e., a public health-care setting.

(1993) regarding the need for future research to investigate recoveries using a different methodology from critical incidents, namely survey research methods.

In chapters 2 and 3, the literature review on goal orientation theory, psychological job outcomes and perceived organisational support was presented. Chapter 4 introduced the last variable to be included in the research's conceptual framework, i.e., service recovery performance. The ultimate aim of the literature review chapters was to provide the theoretical underpinning for the integrative conceptual framework proposed in the next chapter.

5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, a comprehensive literature review was provided. On the basis of chapter 2, which addresses the goal orientation theory and individual learning, the learning goal orientation concept is adopted. In chapter 3, which focuses on the psychological job outcomes literature and organisational support theory, the concepts of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, emotional exhaustion, and perceived organisational support emerge. Finally, chapter 4 introduces the literature on service recovery performance.

Based on the literature review, the purpose of this chapter is to unite all the theories and key concepts previously discussed into an integrative conceptual framework of the determinants of service recovery performance. The framework investigates the impact of both learning goal orientation and perceived organisational support on psychological job outcomes. Additionally, perceived organisational support is included as an antecedent of learning goal orientation. Finally, the effect of both learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes on service recovery performance is investigated. Service recovery performance is the ultimate dependent variable in this study.

This chapter has four sections. In section 5.2, the key concepts examined in the literature review will be revised and the conceptual framework presented. Section 5.3 discusses the antecedents of learning goal orientation. Section 5.4 focuses on the determinants of psychological job outcomes, namely job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion. Finally, section 5.5 addresses the antecedents of service recovery performance.

5.2 Key Concepts for the Study

5.2.1 Perceived Organisational Support Theory

Perceived organisational support has received considerable research attention. By 2002, over 70 empirical studies in different fields have investigated perceived organisational support (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Nevertheless, in the marketing arena, researchers have explored this topic only modestly.

Perceived organisational support may be defined as employees' beliefs regarding the extent to which their organisation values their contribution and concerns with their welfare (Eisenberger et al. 1986). This concept is strongly linked to organisational commitment since organisational commitment reflects employee's attachment to the organisation (Johnston et al. 1990), whereas perceived organisational support reveals an organisation's attachment to the employee.

Organisational support theory is an application of the *reciprocity norm* to employee-employer relationships (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). According to the norm of reciprocity, an individual should not only help, but also not hurt another individual who has helped him/her (Gouldner 1960). This norm will be discussed in more detail when the relationship between perceived organisational support and organisational commitment is addressed.

5.2.2 Learning Goal Orientation Theory

Goal orientation studies are rooted in the fields of educational psychology and child development (VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum 2001). In the 1990's, the study of goal orientation expanded to the management arena (e.g. VandeWalle 1997; VandeWalle and Cummings 1997; Brett and VandeWalle 1999; VandeWalle et al. 1999). In the marketing area, only three studies have investigated goal orientation (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998; Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005).

Goal orientation may be defined as “a mental framework for how individuals interpret and respond to achievement situations” (Brett and VandeWalle 1999, p. 864). In other words, individuals have different goal orientations - i.e., individual differences for goal preferences- in achievement situations (Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Elliot and Dweck 1988). Dweck and colleagues argue that one of the two classes of goals pursued by individuals as a personality dimension within the intellectual achievement domain is *learning goals*. When a learning goal orientation is followed, individuals aim to self-improve by gaining new skills,

mastering new situations and developing their competence (VandeWalle 1997). Thus, learning goals are associated with competence enhancement and ability improvement (Dweck and Leggett 1988). In this study, the concept of learning goal orientation is associated with perceived organisational support, psychological job outcomes and service recovery performance.

5.2.3 Psychological Job Outcomes

Psychological outcomes capture job attitudes which reflect a “psychological approach or avoidance toward the job” (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994, p. 561). Psychological job outcomes comprise three distinct constructs: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion. Job satisfaction and organisational commitment are the most frequently studied psychological job outcomes. Emotional exhaustion has been investigated in prior research as an antecedent of both organisational commitment and job satisfaction (e.g. Babakus et al. 1999).

Job satisfaction may be regarded as a constituent of an individual’s psychological welfare on the job (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). Attitudinal *organisational commitment* reveals the strength of an employee’s identification with, and contribution to a specific organisation (Porter et al. 1974). Finally, *emotional exhaustion* is characterised by a feeling of lack of energy and a sensation of being drained of as a result of extreme psychological demands (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994; Babakus et al. 1999).

It is worth pointing out that the individual dimensions of psychological job outcomes are not treated in this study as a second order construct (see Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). Rather, each element is analysed separately, in order to understand the specific linkages among variables and help managers to act more easily upon each of the dimensions (Babakus et al. 1999).

5.2.4 Service Recovery Performance

Service recovery comprises a set of actions performed by the service organisation and its employees in order to recompense a customer for the losses incurred with a service failure (Gronroos 1988). It is assumed that complaints are made by the customer directly to the firm, since only in these situations is the organisation offered an opportunity to recover successfully from a service failure (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998). It corresponds to a reactive recovery situation, in which the customer's complaint instigates the recovery action (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999).

The failure that led to the recovery situation occurs in the core-service of the restaurant, i.e., the meal service. Some possible sources of failure in the service delivery are unavailability, unjustifiable slowness (e.g. a two hours wait for a meal), and other aspects of the core-service besides unavailability and slowness (e.g. the meal is cold) (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990).

The reason for focusing on service recovery is that theoretical and empirical studies on this topic are scarce (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). In other words, service

recovery has been identified as a neglected area which requires further scholarly research (McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998; Brown, Fisk, and Bitner 1994). Above all, little is known regarding the factors which have an impact on the service recovery performance of frontline employees (Boshoff and Allen 2000). Several reasons justify the focus of this study on service recovery performance from the frontline employees' perspective. First, most research to date has studied service recovery from the consumers' perspective (e.g. Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). Second, the crucial role played by frontline employees in service recovery has been widely recognised (Boshoff and Allen 2000; Boshoff 1997) due to the fact that very often they are the ones receiving the complaints. Third, although the role of frontline employees is acknowledged as being key to service recovery, frontline staff's service recovery function is rarely implemented properly (Boshoff 1997).

The present research is aimed at gaining a better understanding of how employees evaluate their own service recovery performance and the factors that have an impact on it. Accordingly, service recovery performance is the ultimate dependent variable in this study being defined as the individual frontline service employee's perceptions of his/her own skills and actions whilst recovering from a service failure to guarantee customer's satisfaction (Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000).

5.3 Conceptual Framework

This section presents a conceptual framework of the determinants of service recovery performance. The framework analyses the impact of both learning goal orientation and perceived organisational support on psychological job outcomes. In addition, the effect of both learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes on service recovery performance is investigated (see Figure 5.1 below). Therefore, the links between 1) perceived organisational support and learning goal orientation; 2) perceived organisational support and psychological job outcomes; 3) learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes, 4) psychological job outcomes and service recovery performance, and 5) learning goal orientation and service recovery performance, are systematised in this conceptual framework.

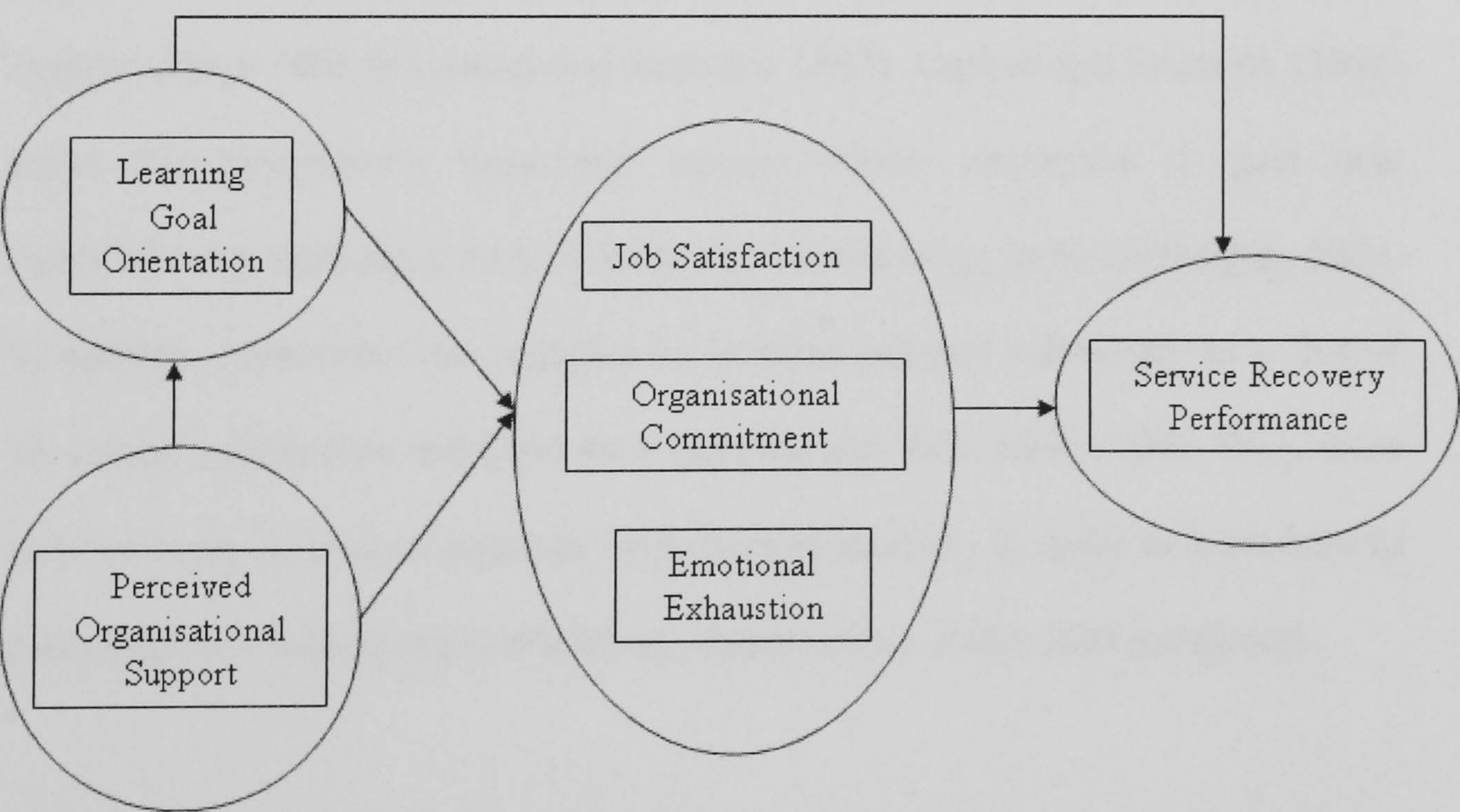


Figure 5.1 Overall Conceptual Framework

5.4 Determinant of Learning Goal Orientation

In this section, a discussion of the relationship between perceived organisational support - the only independent variable in this study- and learning goal orientation is provided. Two relationships have been addressed in previous studies: first, the one between perceived supervisor support - i.e., mentor's support- and learning goal orientation - i.e., personal learning- (see Lankau and Scandura 2002); second, the one between perceived supervisor support and perceived organisational support (see Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001). Based on this literature, a new theoretical relationship between perceived organisational support and learning goal orientation is proposed.

Supervisors, likewise mentors, may provide career support and psychosocial support (Kram 1985 in Lankau and Scandura 2002). Lankau and Scandura (2002) argue that *supervisor's vocational support* allows employees to gain new capabilities by instructing them directly and by allocating them challenging tasks. In addition, supervisors are regarded by learning-oriented individuals as a font of job-related information and know-how (Janssen and VanYperen 2004). Thus, these employees try to interact regularly with their supervisors in order to learn how to deal effectively with rising problems and opportunities within their job domain.

Additionally, *supervisor's psychosocial support* comprises counselling, avowal and friendship (Kram 1985 in Lankau and Scandura 2002), which stimulates trust, supervision and encouragement (Lankau and Scandura 2002). Also, a supervisor's feedback and active listening assists employees in solving problems instead of

providing them with answers (Kram 1985 in Lankau and Scandura 2002), which may help employees to develop their key thinking abilities (Lankau and Scandura 2002). Due to learning-oriented employees' innate work motivation and promptness to work hard, supervisors may provide them with support so that they can instigate, manage and carry out their job tasks with minimum supervision (Janssen and VanYperen 2004).

Ultimately, Lankau and Scandura (2002) have proved that vocational support from a supervisor is positively related to employee's personal learning, in particular relational job learning.

Employees view a supervisor's positive or adverse treatment toward them as a sign of their organisation's support (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). In fact, employees' beliefs that supervisors value their contribution and care about their well-being, i.e., perceived supervisor support, has been found to enhance perceived organisational support (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001). This is due to the fact that employees regard a supervisor's favourable treatment as representative of organisational policies, organisational actions or overall organisational culture (Levinson 1965).

As with supervisor support, it is believed that perceived organisational support contributes to employees' enhancement of their individual learning. Therefore, the greater the perceived organisational support, the more employees are expected to experience learning.

H1: Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with learning goal orientation.

5.5 Determinants of Psychological Job Outcomes

As previously discussed, psychological job outcomes comprise three distinct dimensions: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion. In the following sub-sections, the determinants of each of the three concepts are presented. Based on an extensive literature review, it is proposed that the antecedents of job satisfaction are learning goal orientation, perceived organisational support and emotional exhaustion. The theoretical rationale for all hypotheses related to the determinants of job satisfaction (H2-H4) is presented. This sub-section is followed by the hypotheses regarding the determinants of organisational commitment (H5-H7), namely perceived organisational support, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. The theoretical grounds for H5, H6 and H7 are explained. The section ends with the hypotheses concerning the antecedents of emotional exhaustion (H8-H9), in particular learning goal orientation and perceived organisational support. The theoretical rationale for these two hypotheses is provided.

In sum, section 5.4 presents the theoretical foundation for H2-H9 regarding the determinants of the three dimensions of psychological job outcomes. These eight hypotheses are incorporated in the research's conceptual framework.

5.5.1 Determinants of Job Satisfaction

5.5.1.1 Learning Goal Orientation

Harris, Mowen, and Brown (2005) were the first to explore the effect of learning goal orientation on work satisfaction in a sales context. Likewise, the present research is the first study to investigate the impact of learning goal orientation on job satisfaction in a services context.

Previous research (VanYperen and Janssen 2002) has found a positive relationship between university employees' learning goal orientation and their job satisfaction. In addition, Lankau and Scandura (2002) have proved that job satisfaction is a positive consequence of personal learning.

There are several reasons that justify this positive effect of learning goal orientation on job satisfaction. First, frontline service employees with a learning goal orientation enjoy the process of learning how to provide an efficient service (see Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994) and therefore it is probable that this enjoyment is translated into job satisfaction. Second, personal learning provides employees with a greater understanding of how their own job fits with the company's overall goals (Lankau and Scandura 2002). Third, employees who have enhanced their communication skills and problem-solving capabilities may believe they are more capable and efficient, which may increase their job satisfaction (Lankau and Scandura 2002). Finally, employees who expand their self-knowledge may have

more positive responses to their work environment, due to their augmented self-confidence and skills (Lankau and Scandura 2002). One of these positive reactions to the work environment may be job satisfaction. Hence, it is expected that learning goal orientation has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

H2: Learning goal orientation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

5.5.1.2 Perceived Organisational Support

Shore and Tetrick (1991) argue that because of the shortage of empirical evidence, the association between perceived organisational support and job satisfaction is not clear. Consequently, the authors claim that future research is needed to tackle the link between both constructs. This research attempts to fill this void by incorporating the relationship between the POS and the job satisfaction constructs in this study.

Eisenberger et al. (1997) have proved that POS and overall job satisfaction are strongly related. The relationship between both constructs is a positive one (Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann and Birjulin 1999; Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli and Lynch 1997; Shore and Tetrick 1991; Witt 1992). In terms of causality, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) argue that POS has a positive impact on job satisfaction by:

- a) Satisfying socioemotional needs, namely the needs for esteem, affiliation, emotional support, and social approval (Armeli et al. 1998);
- b) Enhancing performance-reward expectancies;
- c) Showing the availability of help when required.

Additionally, employees with a high POS usually consider their job as more pleasant, are happier at work and experience fewer signs of strain, namely tiredness, burnout, apprehension and headaches (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Based on previous studies, it is proposed that:

H3: Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

5.5.1.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994) found a negative impact of the burnout construct (comprised by emotional exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment and depersonalisation) on the psychological job outcomes construct (encompassing job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions). More specifically, the authors argue that job satisfaction is a consequence of burnout, for two theoretical reasons. First, since burnout is the result of an assessment procedure through which the employee appraises the demands of the job in relation to his or her resources, it is expected that the outcome of this evaluation will have an impact on the employee's job satisfaction. Second, since both burnout and job satisfaction are emotional responses, it is hypothesised that these are related.

Moreover, a negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction has been empirically demonstrated by Lee and Ashforth (1996). Therefore, given that burnout is expected to affect job satisfaction negatively (since it affected negatively the psychological job outcomes construct) and a negative association between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction has been reported, a negative impact of emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction may be anticipated (Babakus et al. 1999; Boles, Johnston, and Hair 1997). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, only two studies (Babakus et al. 1999; Karatepe 2006) have empirically confirmed the negative impact of emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction. Therefore, it is proposed that:

H4: Emotional exhaustion will have a negative relationship with job satisfaction.

5.5.2 Determinants of Organisational Commitment

5.5.2.1 Perceived Organisational Support

In their literature review on POS, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) conclude that POS has been found to be positively associated with affective organisational commitment. Since POS may be defined as an employee's perception of an organisation's commitment to him/her, it is expected that the employee offers affiliation and loyalty in return (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990; Settoon, Bennett, and Liden 1996) and ultimately commitment to the organisation. The underlying theoretical framework is the *norm of reciprocity* (Gouldner 1960)

according to which the employee is encouraged to respond favourably to an organisation's concern with his/her well-being (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001).

Another possible reason for the positive relationship between POS and organisational commitment is the absorption of "organisational membership and role status into social identity" (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001, p. 827). Employees' perceptions that the organisation provides them with support fulfils several socioemotional needs, namely the needs for esteem, affiliation, emotional support, and social approval (Armeli et al. 1998). The satisfaction of these socioemotional needs may result in employees' identification of their organisation's welfare as their own, and may create an emotional bound to the organisation (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001).

Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro (1990) argue that POS should reinforce organisational affective attachment. In their study, they have empirically proved this proposition by finding a positive relationship between POS and affective attachment for manufacturing employees and managers. Moreover, Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996) have reported a strong positive impact of POS on organisational commitment. Finally, POS has been found to be positively related to temporal changes in affective commitment for retail employees, which suggests that POS precedes affective commitment (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001).

H5: Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with organisational commitment.

5.5.2.2 Job Satisfaction

A comprehensive body of literature has addressed the question of causal ordering for the job satisfaction-organisational commitment relationship (Brown and Peterson 1993). Some researchers have argued that organisational commitment precedes job satisfaction (e.g. Bateman and Strasser 1984), while others have not found a relationship at all (e.g. Curry et. al. 1986). However, in line with the majority of conceptual evidence and empirical findings (e.g. Brashear et al. 2003; Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996; Bartol 1979), this research considers that job satisfaction is an antecedent of organisational commitment.

Recently, Brashear et al. (2003) have reported a positive impact of business-to-business salespeople's job satisfaction on their organisational commitment. Also Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads (1996) have confirmed this positive effect of job satisfaction on organisational commitment for a sample of marketing boundary spanners, namely salespeople and customer service representatives. Finally, Johnston et al.'s (1990) longitudinal study also corroborates the positive impact of job satisfaction on organisational commitment.

Ultimately, despite the discussion on the direction of causality, Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis concludes that the predominant effect is from job satisfaction to organisational commitment rather than vice versa.

Based on previous findings and the aforesaid meta-analysis' conclusion, it is hypothesised that greater job satisfaction leads to greater organisational

commitment. The 6th hypothesis emerges:

H6: Job satisfaction will have a positive relationship with organisational commitment.

5.5.2.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Babakus et al. (1999) claim the importance of analysing the effects of each individual dimension of burnout, namely emotional exhaustion, on job-related behaviours. The researcher responds to this call by incorporating in this framework the emotional exhaustion-organisational commitment relationship.

Leiter and Maslach (1988) suggest that a high level of burnout leads to diminished organisational commitment. In particular, they argue that if employees feel emotionally exhausted due to their work, they may become less eager to accept and achieve organisational goals. In other words, emotionally exhausted employees who look upon others in an uncaring way and are not self-fulfilled with their job are expected to be less committed to the organisation (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994).

In empirical terms, emotional exhaustion has been found to have a negative impact on nurses' organisational commitment (Leiter and Maslach 1988). Babakus et al. (1999) corroborate this result by reporting a significant negative effect of salespeople's emotional exhaustion on organisational commitment. Based on previous findings, the following relationship is hypothesised:

H7: Emotional exhaustion will have a negative relationship with organisational commitment.

5.5.3 Determinants of Emotional Exhaustion

As has previously been discussed in the literature review, most of the research to date investigates the overall burnout construct and not each individual dimension. It is believed that this study contributes to the burnout literature by analysing emotional exhaustion in particular. Next, the antecedents of emotional exhaustion are discussed.

5.5.3.1 Learning Goal Orientation

Since a learning goal orientation is associated with the motivation to develop skills and master the tasks performed, individuals tend to search, instigate and pursue challenging situations (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994). Simultaneously, when faced with obstacles, namely task difficulty, task failure, or both, learning-oriented individuals a) are highly and effectively persistent, b) increase their effort and c) maintain their motivation and determination (Dweck 1986; Dweck and Leggett 1988). Overall, individuals with a learning orientation seek challenging situations and are not easily defeated by obstacles in their constant search for intellectual personal growth and development (Dweck 1986; Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994). A learning goal orientation is related to self-improvement, and one's gratification with the learning process, in particular learning new things, new approaches for dealing

with customers and working on new ideas (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Harris, Mowen, and Brown 2005). All the characteristics of a learning-oriented employee, namely the fact that he/she enjoys working, is attracted to challenges and regards mistakes as part of the process of learning (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994) intuitively suggest that this individual is less subject to emotional exhaustion. It is likely that a learning-oriented individual does not feel a) frustrated by his job, b) burned out from it or c) like he/she is at the end of his/her tether. Hence, it is hypothesised that the higher the learning goal orientation, the lower the emotional exhaustion suffered by the frontline employee.

H8: Learning goal orientation will have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion.

5.5.3.2 Perceived Organisational Support

Frontline employees who perceive organisational support to be high usually experience fewer strain symptoms, namely burnout (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002).

In other words, the more supportive the environment, the lower the stress level intensity (Cropanzano et al. 1997).

Leiter and Maslach (1988) have reported a positive impact of unpleasant supervisor contact (an example of non-supportive environment) on the emotional exhaustion of nurses and hospital's support staff. Given that supervisors are organisational agents, their actions are regarded by employees as the organisation's actions (Levinson

1965). Employees tend to associate the positive or unfavourable treatment of their supervisors with the support received by the organisation (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Therefore, it is likely that an unfavourable treatment by the employee's supervisor will be translated into lower perceived organisational support, and consequently, higher emotional exhaustion. In addition, Cropanzano et al. (1997) have demonstrated that burnout is negatively predicted by organisational support. By combining the above mentioned research findings, it is proposed that:

H9: Perceived organisational support will have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion.

5.6 Determinants of Service Recovery Performance

In the following sub-sections, the theoretical rationale for all hypotheses regarding the antecedents of service recovery performance (H10-H13) is presented. The determinants of service recovery performance comprise job satisfaction, organisational commitment, emotional exhaustion and learning goal orientation.

5.6.1 Job Satisfaction

“...the time has come for researchers to reconsider the satisfaction-performance relationship.” (Judge et al. 2001, p. 393)

The link job satisfaction-job performance has received considerable research interest over time (Boshoff and Allen 2000). Evidence is provided by several qualitative (e.g. Brayfield and Crockett 1955; Locke 1970) and quantitative (e.g. Petty, McGee, and Cavender 1984; Iaffaldano and Muchinsky 1985) reviews of the job satisfaction-job performance relationship. The most recent review is that of Judge et al. (2001). They report a mean true correlation between overall job satisfaction and job performance of 0.30. Previously, Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis had argued that job satisfaction and (sales) performance have revealed a steady, yet extremely modest relationship.

When analysing the direction of causality, Keaveney and Nelson (1993) have reported a non-significant impact of job satisfaction on job performance. Nevertheless, Shore and Martin (1989) have proved that job satisfaction accounts for more incremental variance in job performance (than organisational commitment) for professionals and clerical workers. Thus, the few studies that have proposed an impact of job satisfaction on job performance have produced contradictory findings (Judge et al. 2001). In a *services context*, the results have been more consistent. Yoon, Beatty, and Suh (2001) have shown a positive effect of contact employees' job satisfaction on their service performance, as perceived by the customers. More recently, a study carried out by Babakus et al. (2003) has proposed a service recovery performance model. The authors have reported a positive influence of frontline bank employees' job satisfaction on their perceptions of service recovery performance.

The theoretical justification for the impact of satisfaction on performance is based

on the idea that first, an individual is conscious of his/her own feelings; second, the individual relates those feelings to particular job features; and finally, he/she acts in agreement with the feelings (e.g. if the individual is satisfied with the job, he/she will perform better) (Bagozzi 1980a). This relationship is derived from Bagozzi's (1992) attitude theory, according to which an *emotional response*, namely job satisfaction, affects *behaviour*, in particular service recovery performance (Babakus et al. 2003). In line with the evidence provided by previous service research and Bagozzi's (1992) theoretical framework, it is proposed that job satisfaction impacts positively on service recovery performance.

H10: Job satisfaction will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.

5.6.2 Organisational Commitment

Earlier research's results for organisational commitment- performance relationship have been contradictory. The underlying justification for these conflicting results is the differing nature of the commitment being measured (Meyer et al. 1989)⁶. The relationship with performance is mostly positive when affective commitment (i.e., employees *want to* remain with the organisation) has been measured, whereas when continuance commitment (i.e., employees *need to* remain with the organisation) has been measured, the link is ambiguous (Bosshoff and Allen 2000; Meyer et al. 1989).

⁶ Commitment may be classified as affective, normative and continuance commitments (Meyer, Allen, and Smith 1993).

The focus of this research is on affective organisational commitment, which reflects “the strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Porter et al. 1974, p. 604). As a result, a positive impact of organisational commitment on performance is expected.

It is worth to note that Mathieu and Zajac’s (1990) meta-analysis results suggest the existence of a weak relationship of organisational commitment with job performance. Thus, they conclude that in most instances, organisational commitment has predominantly a small direct impact on performance. In a services context, Babakus et al. (2003) empirically proved that affective organisational commitment has a strong positive impact on service recovery performance. Also Boshoff and Allen (2000) have reported a significant positive effect of affective organisational commitment on service recovery performance in the financial services sector. The underlying reason for this is that individuals who are affectively committed to their organisation have a tendency to perform better (Meyer et al. 1989). In conclusion, it is logical to hypothesise that there is a positive relationship between organisational commitment and service recovery performance.

H11: Organisational commitment will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.

5.6.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994) provide the conceptual rationale and empirical evidence for the negative impact of burnout on behavioural performance. In other

words, burnout is considered a predictor of behavioural job outcomes. Burnout has a significant negative, direct impact on behavioural job outcomes, such as job performance, for three reasons (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994):

- 1) the boundary spanner's energy is reduced and therefore his/her effort at work diminishes;
- 2) the boundary spanner enters into a vicious circle, in which he/she is unlikely to ask for and gain support. Consequently, boundary spanner's performance continues to be poor;
- 3) the boundary spanner feels he/she has little, or even no control over the job and therefore when job problems arise, he/she is not confident enough to solve these issues.

With regard to the emotional exhaustion component of burnout, Cropanzano, Rupp, and Byrne (2003) have found that emotional exhaustion predicts job performance. In a sales context, Babakus et al. (1999) have reported a negative, though non-significant, effect of salespersons' emotional exhaustion on their behavioural and outcome performance. Recently, Halbesleben and Bowler's (2007) longitudinal study has investigated the emotional exhaustion-job performance relationship and found that this link is negative and mediated by motivation. Finally, Karatepe (2006) corroborated Babakus et al.'s (1999) study results by reporting a negative, although non-significant, impact of emotional exhaustion on service recovery performance. By integrating previous research findings, and considering that the focus of the present study is on emotional exhaustion and behavioural job outcomes, namely service recovery performance, it is hypothesised that:

H12: Emotional exhaustion will have a negative relationship with service recovery performance.

5.6.4 Learning Goal Orientation

Empirical evidence suggests that a learning goal orientation enhances salespeople's performance by encouraging them to work hard and work smart (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994). In other words, working smart and working hard mediate the relationship between learning goal orientation and performance. Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla (1998) propose one additional reason for an expected positive impact of learning goal orientation on performance: learning-oriented individuals tend to employ self-regulation strategies such as solution-oriented self instruction (Vandewalle and Cummings 1997) and self-checks, which facilitate the development of their abilities and knowledge, and which in turn results in superior performance. In line with the former argument, VandeWalle et al.'s (1999) findings reveal that a learning goal orientation results in higher performance and that this relationship is fully mediated by three self-regulation tactics, namely goal setting, effort, and planning. In addition, Seijts et al. (2004), in their recent work, show that a learning goal orientation has a significant, positive correlation with subsequent performance when a learning goal is set. VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) had previously reported that a learning goal orientation correlated positively with performance (i.e., exam scores). In contrast, in spite of hypothesising a positive relationship between learning goal orientation and salespeople's performance, Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla (1998) found learning orientation to be unrelated to performance. Finally, despite reporting a non-significant, direct relationship

between learning goal orientation and task performance, Brett and VandeWalle (1999) found this relationship to be mediated by the content of goals chosen by individuals. More specifically, the authors report that learning goal orientation had a significant, positive relationship with the skills development and skills refinement dimensions of the skills improvement content goal, which in turn was significantly and positively related to task performance.

On the basis of the preceding discussion and taking into consideration that behavioural outcomes represent the performance outcomes of boundary spanners (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994), and recovery may be conceptualised as service performance (Oliver 1997 in Hess, Ganesan, and Klein 2003), it is proposed that learning goal orientation positively influences the frontline employees' perceptions of their own service recovery performance.

H13: Learning goal orientation will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.

5.7 Summary

Based on the previous literature review, this chapter has presented the development of a conceptual framework and the formulation of a set of hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 refers to perceived organisational support as a determinant of learning goal orientation. Hypotheses 2 to 9 (H2-H9) are about the determinants of psychological job outcomes. The remaining four hypotheses (H10-H13) are related to the determinants of service recovery performance. Of these thirteen hypotheses, four, in

particular *H1*, *H8*, *H9* and *H13*, have been neither theoretically proposed, nor empirically tested. The thirteen research hypotheses are summarised in Table 5.1 and presented in Figure 5.1.

The theoretical rationale supporting each of the research hypotheses is founded on several bodies of literature, namely 1) goal orientation theory and individual learning, 2) the theory of psychological job outcomes, 3) organisational support theory, in particular the norm of reciprocity applied to employee-employer relationships, 4) the theory of service recovery, and 5) attitude theory. Next, a synopsis regarding the underlying theories, which guide the development of each of the thirteen research hypotheses, is provided.

In order to explain three of the new theoretical relationships proposed in this study (i.e., *H1*, *H8* and *H13*), the researcher relied on goal orientation theory, in particular its learning component. *H1* is also anchored in organisational support theory (e.g. Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002; Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001).

Another hypothesis derived from the learning component of goal orientation theory is *H2*. *H2*, which focuses on the relationship between learning goal orientation and job satisfaction, will be empirically tested for the first time in a services context.

Hypotheses regarding the relationship between perceived organisational support and the three psychological job outcomes (i.e., *H3*, *H5* and *H9*) are derived from organisational support theory. More specifically, the underlying theoretical framework for *H5* is the norm of reciprocity, according to which an individual

should not only help, but also not hurt another individual who has helped him/her (Gouldner 1960). In addition to the theory on organisational support, the theoretical basis for the development of the new relationship H9 is the literature on burnout.

Anchored in the literature on psychological job outcomes, three hypotheses regarding relationships within the psychological job outcomes' group, namely *H4*, *H6* and *H7*, are proposed. In particular, the theoretical rationale of H6 emerges from Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis conclusion, namely that the predominant effect is from job satisfaction to organisational commitment.

The remaining three hypotheses regarding psychological job outcomes as determinants of service recovery performance, in particular *H10*, *H11* and *H12*, are founded on past service recovery research (e.g. Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000; Karatepe 2006). H10 derives also from Bagozzi's (1992) attitude theory, according to which an emotional response affects behaviour.

In sum, an overview of the underlying theoretical foundation for the development of each of the thirteen research hypotheses, which are included in the conceptual framework, is provided.

In chapter 6, the methodology employed to test the conceptual framework proposed in this chapter is presented. Issues such as 1) the research design, 2) the development of the survey instrument, namely data collection procedures, and 3) data analysis, are discussed. The subsequent chapter, i.e., chapter 7, addresses mostly the different stages of the data analysis process and presents the findings of

this research. Building on the Research Findings chapter, chapter 8 discusses in further detail the results of this study. The thesis ends with a Conclusion chapter, which provides a summary of the research findings, the theoretical and managerial implications of this study as well as the limitations of the research and directions for future research.

<i>H1</i>	Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with learning goal orientation.
<i>H2</i>	Learning goal orientation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.
<i>H3</i>	Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.
<i>H4</i>	Emotional exhaustion will have a negative relationship with job satisfaction.
<i>H5</i>	Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with organisational commitment.
<i>H6</i>	Job satisfaction will have a positive relationship with organisational commitment.
<i>H7</i>	Emotional exhaustion will have a negative relationship with organisational commitment.
<i>H8</i>	Learning goal orientation will have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion.
<i>H9</i>	Perceived organisational support will have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion.
<i>H10</i>	Job satisfaction will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.
<i>H11</i>	Organisational commitment will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.
<i>H12</i>	Emotional exhaustion will have a negative relationship with service recovery performance.
<i>H13</i>	Learning goal orientation will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.

Table 5-1 Summary of Research Hypotheses

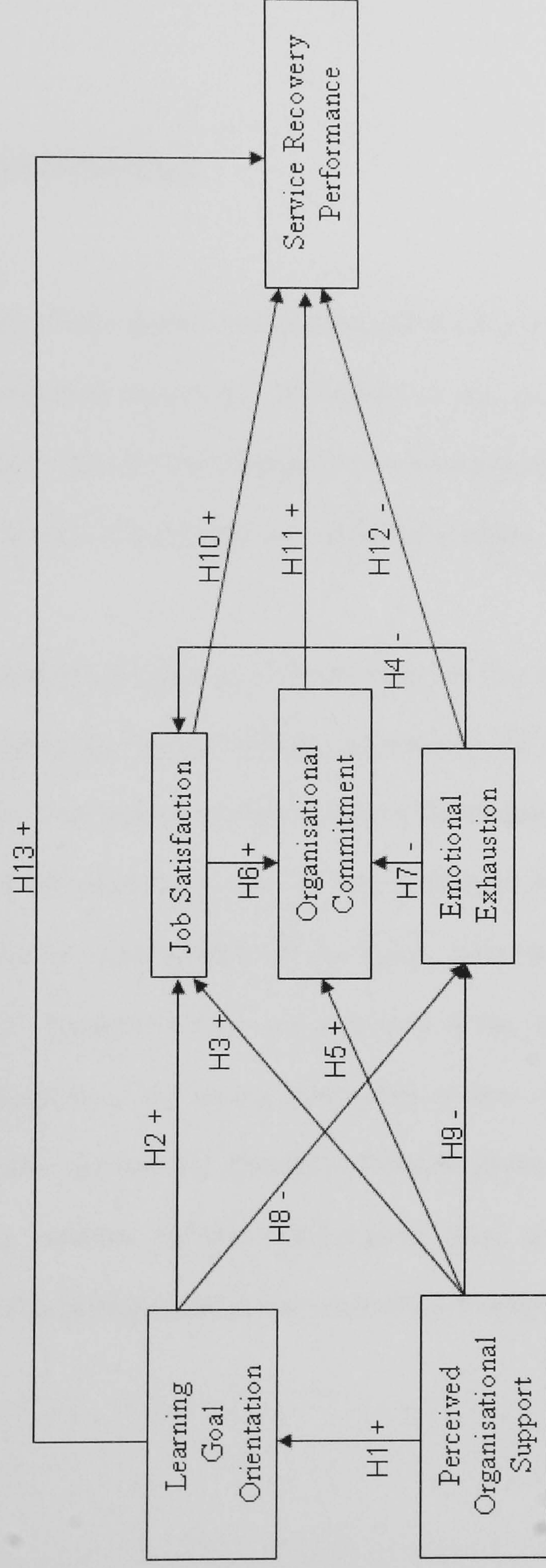


Figure 5-1: Conceptual Framework with Thirteen Research Hypotheses.

6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the methodology employed to test the conceptual framework introduced in the previous chapter. Issues such as research design, the development of the survey instrument as well as data collection and data analysis procedure are explained in detail.

The research methodology chapter comprises five additional main sections. Section 6.2 explains the research design, particularly the research setting and the unit of analysis. The research setting is that of the British roadside catering industry, and the unit of analysis is that of the individual frontline employee. Section 6.3 describes the development of the survey instrument, which was anchored in an extensive literature review and a pre-test of the questionnaire. In section 6.4, the administration of the survey instrument, namely the data collection procedure, is explicated. Section 6.5 describes different phases of the data analysis process, namely construct validity, confirmatory factor analysis and hypotheses testing. Section 6.6 provides a brief summary of the Research Methodology chapter.

6.2 Research Design

6.2.1 Research Setting: Country and Industry

The UK has been selected as the context for the study. Previous research on service recovery performance has been conducted in the USA (e.g. Hess, Ganesan, and Klein 2003; McCollough, Berry, and Yadav 2000; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998), Australia (e.g. McColl-Kennedy, Daus, and Sparks 2003), New Zealand (e.g. Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005) and Turkey (e.g. Babakus et al. 2003). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to analyse the service recovery phenomenon in a European Union (EU) country.

The research has been carried out in the context of a specific service setting: restaurant and fast food industry. The restaurant and fast food market is considered a service industry since employees are responsible for the meal preparation, taking the order, serving the meal, providing the bill and cleaning after the meal is finished (Berry 1980). These tasks represent the numerous circumstances in which the employees are providing a service to the customer.

The *catering industry*, which comprises restaurants and fast food, was ideal for testing the conceptual framework for two reasons. First, the catering industry, namely restaurants, is regarded as a high-contact business (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990) because of the substantial amount of contact between the customer

and the provider of the service (Berry 1980). Therefore, the service process in this industry presents numerous opportunities for the occurrence of service failure and consequent service recovery. Second, restaurants have been identified as the most frequent type of service subject to customer complaints among over thirty different types of services (Tax and Brown 1998). For these two reasons, the catering industry has been selected as the research setting for this study.

Within the British catering industry, the focus of this research is on roadside catering, in particular *motorway service areas* (MSAs). The market is characterised by eight motorway service areas' operators: Moto, Welcome Break, RoadChef, Extra MSA, Westmorland Motorway Services Ltd, First Motorway Services, Cairn Lodge and Poplar 2000. Moto is currently the largest UK operator, followed by Welcome Break, with RoadChef in third place. The study was conducted across multiple locations of "firm X", comprising 48 sites.

The focal point of the research is on the catering service provided by the MSAs. Each of "firm X"'s site may comprise several catering franchises, namely Little Chef, Burger King, Harry Ramsdens, Ritazza and Upper Crust. The existence of several different franchises within each site and the multiple site locations guarantee variance in the data.

6.2.2 Unit of Analysis and Sampling Frame

Bernard (2000) suggests that data should be collected at the lowest level unit of analysis possible. This is due to the fact that one may always aggregate data

previously collected at the individual level, whereas data collected at the group level may not be disaggregated. In line with Bernard (2000)'s suggestion, this study's data were collected at the *individual frontline employee* level. The individual is undoubtedly the most frequent unit of analysis in social studies (Corbetta 2003).

Data are collected from frontline employees, rather than consumers, since most research to date has studied service recovery from the consumers' perspective (e.g. Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999) and has thus collected data from consumers.

An alternative to collecting data from frontline employees would be to collect data from managers. Nevertheless, this would imply that one manager would have to fill in several surveys in order to evaluate every single frontline employee under his supervision. This procedure would be extremely time-consuming and tiresome from the manager's perspective, possibly lowering the quality of the data collected.

The sampling frame is comprised by frontline employees of *one single company*, more specifically the largest UK operator of motorway service areas. The fact that research is conducted in a single firm raises the issue of the limited generalisability of the results to identical firms. Nevertheless, the use of a single company reduces probable contingencies, which are frequent in multi-industry research (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994). In particular, the benefit of focusing on a single firm research design is that it allows controlling for contextual effects, such as corporate culture and service delivery situation (see Piercy et al. 2006). Overall, the advantage of a single company study is that it minimises the likely impact of organisational and environmental factors on the research findings (Babakus et al. 1999).

6.3 Development of the Survey Instrument

The development of the questionnaire was a two-stage process comprising a literature review and a pre-test of the questionnaire. In particular, the survey instrument was developed using focus group data from frontline employees, as well as feedback from academics to adapt existing and, in most cases, well-established measures of the core constructs (Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996).

6.3.1 Literature Review and Existing Measurement Scales

Previous literature provided the scale items used to measure the concepts of interest. The bulk of the instrument is composed of scale indicators that have been used in past research on perceived organisational support, learning goal orientation (i.e., personal learning and mastery orientation), psychological job outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion) and service recovery performance. Next, each construct's definition and operationalisation is presented.

Operational Definitions of Constructs

As previously discussed, all the constructs of this study were operationalised using measures withdrawn from the extant literature. In order to guarantee high-quality data, the need to assure a brief survey instrument was balanced with the use of

multi-item scales by employing short versions of the scales when these were available (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994).

For all the constructs, the respondents indicated the extent of their agreement with each item either on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree) or a 7-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). The scales of mastery orientation, personal learning, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion were 5-point Likert-type scales, while perceived organisational support, organisational commitment and service recovery performance were 7-point Likert-type scales.

6.3.1.1 Perceived Organisational Support

POS reveals the quality of the relationship between the employee and the organisation by measuring the extent to which employees believe that the organisation values their contributions and cares about their welfare (Eisenberger et al. 1986). Thus, POS reflects employees' assessment of the treatment received by the organisation, as well as an organisation's appraisal of their efforts (Masterson et al. 2000; Settoon, Bennett, and Liden 1996).

Shore and Tetrick (1991) have established the *construct validity* of the Survey of Perceived Organisational Support (SPOS). Empirical evidence based on employees with distinct occupations and from different organisations demonstrates the high internal reliability and unidimensionality of Eisenberger et al. (1986)'s scale, both in its 36-item original version (one single factor accounting for 48.3% of the

variance and cronbach-alpha of 0.97) and subsequent shorter forms of the scale (e.g. Masterson et al. 2000; Settoon, Bennett, and Liden 1996; Shore and Wayne 1993; Eisenberger et al. 2002; Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Since there is empirical evidence for the original scale's unidimensionality and high internal reliability, the use of shorter forms is not expected to be problematical (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). According to the authors, the only concern surrounds the incorporation of the two facets of POS's definition, namely organisation's valuation of employees' contribution and its care for their welfare, in the shorter versions of the scale. Hence, in order to guarantee a practical survey length (Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996), perceived organisational support was measured using eight items from the short form of the Survey of Perceived Organisational Support (Eisenberger et al. 1986). Both facets of the definition of POS were incorporated. Representative items include "[Company's name] really cares about my well-being" and "[Company's name] fails to appreciate any extra-effort from me (R)"⁷.

6.3.1.2 Learning Goal Orientation

Learning goal orientation was represented by two distinct constructs: 1) personal learning, which comprises two dimensions and 2) mastery orientation. Neither scale has been used extensively in prior research. Personal learning was operationalised as a 12-item scale with the relational job learning dimension (cronbach alpha= 0.82) and the personal skill development dimension (cronbach alpha= 0.84). Mastery orientation was operationalised by using a nine-item scale, which exhibits alpha reliabilities ranging from 0.86 to 0.90 across studies.

⁷ A more detailed explanation on specific items is available on Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) paper.

6.3.1.2.1 *Personal Learning*

Based on the idea that obtaining technical knowledge of the job and procedural information about a company are no longer satisfactory learning outcomes, Lankau and Scandura (2002) consider two relevant types of *personal learning*: relational job learning and personal skill development. Relational job learning is defined as an “increased understanding about the interdependence or connectedness of one’s job to others” (Lankau and Scandura 2002, p. 780). The authors also define personal skills development as the acquisition of new expertises and abilities which improve working relationships. The former component of personal learning is related to employees’ listening and communication skills, as well as their ability to solve problems (Lankau and Scandura 2002). Regarding the construct validity of the two dimensions, the authors have concluded that these present content validity. The cronbach alpha reliabilities were also calculated: the relational job learning dimension presented a cronbach alpha of 0.82 and the personal skill development dimension presented a cronbach alpha of 0.84.

The researcher adapted the personal learning measure developed by Lankau and Scandura (2002). Both content domains of personal learning, namely relational job learning and personal skill development, were incorporated in this study, each dimension comprising six items. Albeit most of the items match exactly Lankau and Scandura’s (2002) measure, a few minor changes were necessary in order to fit the scale to the frontline employee’s sample.

6.3.1.2.2 *Mastery Orientation*

Mastery orientation was measured using items drawn from the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) developed by Duda (2001) and tested soon after by VanYperen and Janssen (2002). Two years later, Janssen and VanYperen (2004) proposed a broader scale comprising eleven items. The scale employed in this study is the original mastery orientation scale by Duda (2001) and one additional item withdrawn from Janssen and VanYperen's (2004) work. Due to space constraints on the survey, two items included in Janssen and VanYperen's (2004) research which presented a very low standardised factor loadings (i.e. 0.44 and 0.45) were excluded from this study⁸.

Frontline employees were asked to think of situations in which they felt successful on their job and to indicate their level of agreement with each of the mastery-orientation items⁹. The scale presented high internal reliability with a cronbach alpha ranging from 0.86 (VanYperen and Janssen 2002) to 0.90 (Janssen and VanYperen 2004).

6.3.1.3 Psychological Job Outcomes

Psychological job outcomes were measured by three separate first-order constructs. Job satisfaction was operationalised through a 5-item scale with alpha reliability

⁸ Hair et al. (2006, p. 777) suggest that "... a good rule of thumb is that standardized loading estimates should be 0.5 or higher...".

⁹ More specifically, questionnaire items were introduced with the heading "I feel successful on my job when...".

ranging from 0.84 to 0.93 (Judge and Colquitt 2004). Organisational commitment was operationalised using a 6-item version (Hartline, Maxham III, and McKee 2000) of the original 15-item scale (Porter et al. 1974; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979). The former 15-item scale presents high reliability: the coefficient alpha (Cronbach 1951) ranges from 0.82 to 0.93 across eight samples. Emotional exhaustion is represented by an 8-item measure, which exhibits a cronbach-alpha of 0.84 (Babakus et al. 1999).

6.3.1.3.1 Job Satisfaction

There are two main approaches to measuring job satisfaction. One assesses satisfaction with different job facets and the other measures job satisfaction globally. Since previous research demonstrated that the global assessment is superior to the one based on facets (e.g., Scarpello and Campbell 1983), an overall measure of job satisfaction was employed in this investigation. To measure overall job satisfaction, five items were derived from Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) eighteen-items scale. These five items were chosen among the eighteen original items, based on a more recent study by Judge and Colquitt (2004). Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) original measure presented a reliability coefficient of 0.87. Judge and Colquitt's (2004) five-item scale revealed good reliability properties with a cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.84 at Time 1 to 0.93 at Time 2. A sample item is "I feel fairly satisfied with my present job".

6.3.1.3.2 *Organisational Commitment*

There are two main theoretical perspectives on the growth of organisational commitment (Blau and Boal 1987). Both viewpoints reflect the idea of the individual's attachment to the organisation (Johnston et al. 1990). In the first perspective, commitment is regarded mostly as a function of individual *behavior*. From the second standpoint, commitment is viewed as a dynamic and positive *attitude* to the organisation (Johnston et al. 1990). Since the most frequently investigated type of OC has been attitudinal organisational commitment (Mathieu and Zajac 1990), this type of commitment constitutes the focus of this research.

In measurement terms, one of the most widely employed measures of OC has been the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire – OCQ - (Meyer et al. 1989) developed by Porter and colleagues (Porter et al. 1974; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979). Porter and colleagues developed a fifteen-item questionnaire (the OCQ) in order to assess the degree to which individuals are committed to their organisation. The authors argue that attitudinal OC reveals the strength of an individual's identification with, and contribution to a particular organisation. Conceptually, it can be characterised by three dimensions: a) a belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of the organisation; b) a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organisation; and c) a strong desire to continue a member of the organisation (Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979).

Evidence on the reliability of OC is fairly extensive (Morrow 1983). Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) report internal consistency based on 1) *coefficient alpha*

(Cronbach 1951), which is always very high, ranging from 0.82 to 0.93 across eight samples; 2) *item analysis*: every single item shows a positive correlation with the total score for the OCQ, with the average correlations ranging from 0.36 to 0.72 and a median correlation of 0.64; and 3) *factor analysis*, which demonstrates that the items were measuring a single underlying construct. In addition, the authors perform test-retest reliabilities for two samples, and these indicate that OCQ is relatively stable over time. Lastly, Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) assess convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity and conclude that OCQ presents satisfactory validity levels.

Based on the reliability (coefficient alpha) and the results of item analysis, Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) argue that a shorter form of the OCQ may be an adequate proxy for the original, fifteen-item scale. Therefore, in line with a more recent study (Hartline, Maxham III, and McKee 2000), a six-item version of the scale from Porter and colleagues (1974, 1979) was employed in order to minimise questionnaire length.

6.3.1.3.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is characterised by “feelings of being emotionally overextended and drained by one’s contact with other people” (Leiter and Maslach 1988, p. 297).

In line with previous research (Babakus et al. 1999), emotional exhaustion was operationalised through eight items. These eight emotional exhaustion items were

adapted from the Maslach Burnout Inventory -MBI- (Maslach and Jackson 1981, 1986). The 8-item emotional exhaustion subscale of the MBI is a widely employed measure and its psychometric properties have been tested (Babakus et al. 1999). Maslach and Jackson (1981) assess the internal consistency for emotional exhaustion by estimating cronbach's coefficient alpha, which assumes the value of 0.89 (frequency) and 0.86 (intensity). In addition, the authors report a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.82 (frequency) and 0.53 (intensity) for emotional exhaustion. Finally, they demonstrate convergent and discriminant validity. In later studies, Leiter and Maslach (1988) reported a cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.91 and Babakus et al. (1999) of 0.84 for emotional exhaustion.

6.3.1.4 Service Recovery Performance

Service recovery performance is defined as the individual frontline service employee's perception of his/her own skills and actions whilst resolving a service failure to guarantee customer's satisfaction (Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000).

The most widely used measure of service recovery performance from the *frontline employees'* viewpoint is that developed by Boshoff and Allen (2000) comprising five-item and based on Behrman and Perrault's (1984) work. The measure demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability exhibiting a cronbach alpha of 0.70. Similar to previous recent studies (e.g. Babakus et al. 2003; Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005), this scale is the one employed in this research.

The use of a self-reported measure of service recovery performance is based on the argument that frontline employees are very efficient at evaluating performance outcomes, and their views are similar to those of the customers (Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000; Schneider and Bowen 1985; Bitner, Booms, and Mohr 1994).

The operational definitions of constructs are summarised in Table 6.1, which provides the items, reliability and source of each construct.

Construct	Items Included		Cronbach's alpha n= 740	Source
Perceived Organisational Support (POS)			0.97 ^a	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
	POS1	[Company's name] values my contribution to its well-being.		
	POS2	[Company's name] fails to appreciate any extra effort from me (R).		
	POS3	[Company's name] would ignore any complaint from me (R).		
	POS4	[Company's name] really cares about my well-being.		
	POS5	Even if I did the best job possible, [company's name] would fail to notice (R).		
	POS6	[Company's name] cares about my general satisfaction at work.		
	POS7	[Company's name] shows very little concern for me (R).		
	POS8	[Company's name] takes pride in my accomplishments at work.		
Learning Goal Orientation Mastery Orientation			0.86; 0.90	Duda (2001), VanYperen and Janssen (2002), Janssen and VanYperen (2004)
	MO1	I feel <i>successful</i> on my job when... ... I acquire new knowledge or learn a new skill by trying hard.		
	MO2	... I acquire new knowledge or master a new skill which was difficult for me in the past.		
	MO3	... I learn something that motivates me to continue.		
	MO4	... I feel I am improving.		
	MO5	... I learn something that makes me want to practice more.		
	MO6	... I learn something new that is fun to do.		
	MO7	... I get the maximum out of myself.		
	MO8	... I improve on particular aspects.		
	MO9	... I master new knowledge or a new skill.		

Construct		Items Included	Cronbach's alpha n= 740	Source
Personal Learning				Lankau and Scandura (2002)
	<i>Relational Job Learning</i>		0.82	
	PL1	I have learned about how another department functions.		
	PL2	I have increased my knowledge about [company's name] as a whole.		
	PL3	I have learned about other people's perceptions about me or my job.		
	PL4	I have increased my understanding of issues and problems outside my job.		
	PL5	I better understand how my job or department affects others.		
	PL6	I have a better understanding of organisational politics.		
	<i>Personal Skill Development</i>		0.84	
	PL7	I have learned how to communicate effectively with other people.		
	PL8	I have improved my listening skills.		
	PL9	I have developed new ideas about how to perform my job.		
	PL10	I have become more sensitive to other people's feelings and attitudes.		
	PL11	I have gained new skills.		
	PL12	I have expanded the way I think about things.		
Psychological Job Outcomes				
Job Satisfaction			0.87; 0.84 to 0.93	Brayfield and Rothe (1951); Judge and Colquitt, (2004)
	JS1	Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.		
	JS2	I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.		
	JS3	Each day at work seems like it will never end (R).		
	JS4	I find real enjoyment in my work.		
	JS5	I consider my job rather unpleasant (R).		

Construct	Items Included		Cronbach's alpha n= 740	Source
Organisational Commitment	OC1	I talk up [company's name] to my friends as a great organisation to work for.	0.82 to 0.93	Porter et al. (1974); Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979)
	OC2	I find that my values and [company's name]'s values are very similar.		
	OC3	I am proud to tell others that I am a part of [company's name].		
	OC4	[Company's name] inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.		
	OC5	I am extremely glad I chose [company's name] to work for over other companies I was considering at the time.		
	OC6	For me, [company's name] is the best of all possible organisations to work for.		
Emotional Exhaustion			0.89; 0.91; 0.84	Maslach and Jackson (1981); Leiter and Maslach (1988); Babakus et al. (1999)
	EE1	I feel emotionally drained by my work.		
	EE2	I do not feel used up at the end of the workday (R).		
	EE3	I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.		
	EE4	I feel burned out from my job.		
	EE5	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.		
	EE6	I feel frustrated by my job.		
	EE7	In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.		
	EE8	I feel like I am at the end of my tether.		

Construct	Items Included		Cronbach's alpha n= 740	Source
Service Recovery Performance	SRP1	Considering all the things I do, I handle dissatisfied customers quite well.	0.70	Boshoff and Allen (2000)
	SRP2	I don't mind dealing with complaining customers.		
	SRP3	I do not let any customer I deal with leave with problems unresolved.		
	SRP4	Satisfying complaining customers is a great thrill to me.		
	SRP5	Complaining customers I have dealt with in the past are among today's most loyal customers.		

(R) Reversed items

a- Cronbach's alpha of the 36-item original version of the scale (Eisenberger et al. 1986).

Table 6-1 Items, Reliabilities and Sources of Scales used in Previous Studies

6.3.2 Pre-test of the Survey Instrument

The pre-testing of the questionnaire was executed in five sequential stages.

First, one Academic and the Human Resources Director of the company provided comments on the initial draft of the questionnaire. On the basis of their comments, the questionnaire was refined in terms of its length and wording.

The second stage comprised six focus groups with three to six frontline employees. In total, thirty employees, namely general assistants (GAs) and supervisors, participated at this stage. In line with Kohli and Jaworski's (1994) research, frontline employees were requested to fill out the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher as well as other frontline employees from the same site. The

researcher encouraged frontline employees to indicate any items that were ambiguous, non-applicable, repetitive and/or the ones that they would prefer not to answer (Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998). They were also invited to point out any other problems with the survey. At this stage, an area general manager (AGM) was also asked to provide comments on the survey. After each focus group being conducted, as based on respondents' input, the questionnaire was revised and modified items were incorporated and tested in the subsequent focus-group.

The third stage of the pre-test consisted of informal meetings with two academic experts in the Marketing area. Each academic went through the entire questionnaire and assessed the content validity¹⁰ of the items.

The fourth phase of the pre-test was carried out through additional focus groups of frontline employees. Following the same procedure as in stage two of the pre-test, three focus groups with four frontline employees were conducted.

After integrating the feedback from the abovementioned frontline employees, other four academics were asked to re-assess the content validity of the questionnaire items.

¹⁰ Content validity may be defined as “a subjective measure of how appropriate items seem to a group of reviewers who have knowledge of the subject matter” (Litwin, 1995: 35). More specifically, content validity (or face validity) subjectively evaluates the association between each item and the scale's conceptual definition (Hair et al. 1998).

In sum, content validity (or face validity) was evaluated by using ratings by expert judges as well as pre-tests with several sub-populations, namely focus groups comprising frontline employees (Hair et al. 1998).

As a result of these five pre-test phases, a clearer and easier to respond version of the survey emerged. The final version of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1) comprised the following sections:

1. Section I - *Employee's views*, including a) opinions about his/her job; b) feelings towards his/her job; c) work experience; d) job satisfaction; e) relationship with other employees and relationship with the company and f) similarity of his/her values to the organisation's values;
2. Section II - *Employee's behaviour*, covering a) work style, b) dealing with customers; c) chances of leaving the job and d) views and expectations on customer service;
3. Section III - *Employee's background information*, namely gender, age, education, position, work status and tenure.

On the 13th of June of 2005 the final questionnaire was sent out.

6.4 Administration of the Survey Instrument

6.4.1 Targeted Respondents

Data were collected from *catering employees* in *frontline* positions at the largest motorway service area operator in the UK. This company is a large international service organisation with operations in several countries (e.g. Germany, Italy, Portugal, Greece, Japan, USA) in addition to the UK operations.

Frontline catering employees were selected as respondents since the services literature advocates that these individuals are the most prone to addressing service failure through recovery efforts (Boshoff and Allen 2000). Another reason for choosing frontline personnel is that the closer the individual who executes the recovery is to the real service failure, the more significant the improvement in customer satisfaction (Boshoff 1997). This is justified by the fact that frontline employees work on the “boundary,” interfacing the customers very often (Johnston et al. 1990), and therefore they are the ones most likely to accurately assess the customer’s needs (Boshoff 1997). Additionally, they are also expected to understand clearly the efficiency of their recovery efforts.

In conclusion, the type of employees investigated was service employees; the type of customer served was essentially individual customers, and the study focused on a single-company workforce¹¹.

6.4.2 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected from all catering employees in fifty-five motorway service areas¹² of the largest MSAs' operator in the UK. The Human Resources (HR) department provided a list with the number of catering employees in each unit/restaurant within a specific MSA. All of them were given the opportunity to participate. The Human Resources department sent a pack by mail, with surveys, to every single MSA. Each packet contained a cover letter for the area general manager (AGM), and several envelopes containing the surveys for each unit. The AGM handed in one packet to the department manager (DM) or assistant department manager (ADM) in each unit/restaurant whom then distributed the questionnaires to their own frontline employees. A covering letter attached to the questionnaire explained the participants that the study was being conducted to improve the delivery of customer service strategies by managers to frontline employees. To encourage frankness, employees were given written assurance in the covering letter that their responses would be kept confidential. Catering employees

¹¹ A more detailed explanation regarding the sample is provided in the following Research Findings chapter.

¹² Please note that if there are two motorway service areas (MSAs) in the same location (i.e., one MSA in each side of the road, e.g. Washington North and Washington South), the researcher considered these as two different MSAs.

completed the questionnaire during work hours and returned it in a sealed prepaid envelope directly to the researcher¹³.

The co-operation of the company was crucial for the success of this project. Six days before sending out the survey, the “HR Weekly News” of the company published an article titled “Customer Service Survey” to brief employees on the forthcoming survey. On the 13th of June 2005, a total of 2324 catering employees received an envelope containing a covering letter, a survey, and a return prepaid envelope. One week after the first article, another briefing named “Warwick University Project” was incorporated in the “HR Weekly News”. Two weeks later, a third and last briefing titled “Customer Service Survey” was circulated in the company’s “HR Weekly News”. In total, the data collection lasted for four weeks.

In terms of *response rate*, the survey was distributed to 2324 employees and 839 surveys were returned, for a response rate of around 36%. Nevertheless, 99 of the questionnaires received were not usable¹⁴, yielding a usability rate of about 32%.

¹³ As previously discussed, the questionnaire was developed and pre-tested in focus groups with frontline catering employees and academics.

¹⁴ A more detailed explanation for the exclusion of 99 questionnaires is provided in the data analysis chapter.

6.5 Data Analysis

6.5.1 Construct Validity

Construct validity may be defined as the extent to which an operational scale accurately reflects the concept under investigation (Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003; Hair et al. 1998). A more realistic definition of construct validity is “the degree to which a measure assesses the construct it is purported to assess” (Peter 1981, p. 134).

Steenkamp and Van Trijp (1991) advocate that several criteria should be fulfilled in order to accomplish construct validity. Among these criteria are 1) unidimensionality; 2) reliability; 3) convergent validity; 4) discriminant validity and 5) nomological validity.

6.5.1.1 Unidimensionality

Unidimensional measures imply that a set of items, i.e., measured variables, load on only one underlying construct (Hair et al. 2006). Several authors (e.g. Steenkamp and Van Trijp 1991; Anderson, Gerbing, and Hunter 1987) suggest the employment of CFA to assess unidimensionality. This suggestion was followed in this research

by firstly assessing unidimensionality with a CFA of the items of each individual construct¹⁵ and secondly with a CFA of the entire set of items.

Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma (2003) point out that establishing unidimensionality is crucial, since only afterwards it is possible to assess reliability, in particular internal consistency through coefficient alpha (Cronbach 1951) as well as to perform theory testing. In other words, unidimensionality is a necessary condition for construct validity, reliability and theory testing. Therefore, as previously pointed out, CFA was run in order to assess the unidimensionality of the measures.

6.5.1.2 Reliability Analysis

Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma (2003) claim the existence of three types of reliability: a) test-retest reliability, b) alternative-form reliability, and c) internal consistency reliability. *Test-retest reliability* consists of the correlation between the same measures in two different time periods (period t and period $t+1$) in order to assess item stability over time. *Alternative-form reliability* is estimated as based on the correlation between item 1 in period t and item 2 in period $t+1$, in which item 1 and item 2 measure the same concept. The abovementioned forms of reliability require a longitudinal data set. Since the data collected in this study is cross-sectional, these two forms of reliability are not estimated. Hair et al. (1998) categorise a set of diagnostic measures to evaluate *internal consistency* into three groups: a) measures related to each individual item, namely item-to-total correlation

¹⁵ If the measurement model fit is bad, it may be indicative of non-unidimensional measures.

and the inter-item correlation; b) a coefficient that measures the reliability of the whole scale, in particular cronbach alpha (Cronbach 1951) and c) measures anchored in confirmatory factor analysis¹⁶, specifically composite reliability and average variance extracted. The most widely used measure of internal consistency reliability is coefficient alpha (Cronbach 1951). Coefficient alpha reflects both the degree to which several items measuring a unique construct are interrelated and the common variance among items (Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003). The individual scale items should measure the same construct, and therefore should be highly correlated (Churchill 1979; Hair et al. 1998).

In the Research Findings chapter, cronbach alpha, composite reliability and the average variance extracted are reported for each construct.

6.5.1.3 Validity

In the following paragraphs, three types of validity are discussed: convergent validity, discriminant validity and nomological validity.

Convergent validity assesses the degree to which two independent measures of the same concept are highly correlated (Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003). High correlations between alternative measures point out that the construct is measuring its proposed concept (Hair et al. 1998)¹⁷. In order to assess convergent validity, the

¹⁶ Confirmatory factor analysis is explained in the next section of this chapter.

¹⁷ In order to minimise the length of the questionnaire, two different measures of the same concept were not included.

magnitude and the statistical significance (t -values) of the factor loading estimates were examined (see Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Hair et al. 2006).

Discriminant validity may be defined as the “degree to which two conceptually similar concepts are distinct” (Hair et al. 2006, p. 137). The authors argue that the correlation between the scale and a similar, but conceptually distinctive measure, is expected to be low. Discriminant validity is assessed as based on Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) criteria: the average variance extracted (VE) for each construct must be superior to the squared correlation between two constructs. In other words, internal consistency must exceed external consistency.

For Hair et al. (1998), *nomological validity* denotes the extent to which the scale makes precise predictions concerning other concepts in a model based on theory. In other words, the researcher has to identify relationships that have theoretical support from previous research and subsequently evaluate whether the scale has analogous relationships. Thus, nomological validity refers to the investigation of both the theoretical link between distinct constructs and the empirical relationship between these constructs’ measures (Peter 1981). Evidence of nomological validity is provided by analysing whether the correlations among the constructs are in line with theory. The matrix of construct correlations provides the information required (Hair et al. 2006).

Ultimately, following the explanation on the three types of validity, it is important to note that construct validity is a necessary condition to achieve theory development and testing (Peter 1981; Steenkamp and Van Trijp 1991).

6.5.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

There are two types of factor analysis: exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). While EFA is related to theory development, CFA is associated with theory testing about the underlying latent processes (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). The aim in CFA is to answer the question: “Are the correlations among variables consistent with a hypothesized factor structure?” (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001, p. 585).

As previously discussed, all the measures employed in this research were derived from the literature, and have been empirically tested. Therefore, the researcher is interested in either corroborating or rejecting the predetermined theory (Hair et al. 2006). In other words, CFA is a technique used to confirm or reject an *a priori* hypothesis regarding the relationship of numerous items to their respective factors (Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003). Thus, the measurement model component of the structural equation modelling (SEM) uses numerous indicators for a unique independent or dependent variable that is a latent construct, which cannot be measured directly (Hair et al. 1998).

In assessing the *measurement model fit*, the focus is on the relations between each construct (i.e., latent variables) and respective indicators (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). Initially, the validity and the reliability of the indicators must be assessed. Evidence of validity is given by all the loadings of the indicators being significant (*t*-values superior to 1.96). Reliability is evaluated by analysing items' squared multiple correlation (R^2). The R^2 value indicates the amount of variance in

the dependent/endogenous variable explained by the independent/exogenous variable(s) in the equation. No cut-off value has been established for R^2 in multiple regression (Hair et al. 2006) but a rule of thumb is that the coefficient of determination should be superior to 0.3. In addition to the analysis of individual items, it is necessary to assess the composite reliability and average variance extracted for each construct. The recommended value for the composite reliability is greater than 0.70 (Hair et al. 2006). The average variance extracted may be defined as “the amount of variance that is captured by the construct in relation to the amount of variance due to measurement error (Fornell and Larcker 1981, p. 45). It is recommended that the average variance extracted is equal or superior to 0.50 (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). CFA is the technique to assess the scale’s internal consistency (Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003).

In summary, confirmatory factor analysis is used to assess the measurement properties of the construct measures (Babakus et al. 1999), in particular the construct’s validity, internal consistency reliability as well as average variance extracted. Additionally, CFA allows for the evaluation of the validity and reliability of the items.

Ultimately, CFA is essential, since “a good measurement theory is a necessary condition to obtain useful results from SEM¹⁸” (Hair et al. 2006).

¹⁸ SEM stands for Structural Equation Modeling.

6.5.3 Hypotheses Testing

Following the assessment of the measurement scales, the hypotheses were tested using the estimation procedures for simultaneous equations (LISREL 8.72) developed by Joreskog and Sorbom (1996-2001). The structural model component of the structural equation modelling is a “path” model, in which dependent and independent variables are related (Hair et al 1998). Decisions as to which exogenous variables predict each endogenous variable are based on theory (Hair et al 2006).

When LISREL is employed to assess nomological validity, the goodness-of-fit of the structural relationships is extremely important (Steenkamp and Van Trijp 1991). In order to assess the overall fit of the model¹⁹, numerous goodness-of-fit indices are available (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). *Absolute fit measures* provide information on the extent to which the model as a whole “predicts the observed covariance or correlation matrix”, while the *relative fit measures* are based on a comparison of the estimated model to a particular baseline model, also known as the null model (Hair et al. 1998, p. 654). Absolute fit measures include the chi-square statistic, the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) whereas relative/incremental fit indices comprise non-normed fit index (NNFI), normed fit index (NFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI). Table 6.2 provides a detailed explanation of each individual index.

¹⁹ Overall fit of the model may be defined as the extent to which the full model fits the empirical data (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000).

Absolute Fit Measures	
Chi-square Statistic (χ^2)	χ^2 offers “a test of perfect fit in which the null hypothesis is that the model fits the population data perfectly. A statistically significant chi-square causes rejection of the null hypothesis, implying imperfect model fit and possible rejection of the model” (Jaccard and Wan 1996, p. 18). Nevertheless, the χ^2 has intrinsic disadvantages for models based on large samples and a large number of items (Hair et al 2006; Bentler 1990). Therefore, it will be used with caution in this study.
Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)	GFI is indicative of the amount of variances and covariances explained by the model and consequently provides information on how well the model replicates the observed covariance matrix (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). GFI values may range from 0 to 1 with higher values suggesting better fit; GFI values greater than 0.90 reflect an acceptable fit (Hair et al. 2006). Nonetheless, GFI like χ^2 is sensitive to sample size and therefore will be interpreted with caution (Hair et al 2006).
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	RMSEA shows “how well would the model, with unknown but optimally chosen parameter values, fit the population covariance matrix if it were available” (Browne and Cudeck 1993, p. 137-138). Good fit is represented by values below 0.05, reasonable fit is given by values between 0.05 and 0.08, a value above 0.08 is indicative of mediocre fit (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000).
Relative/Incremental Fit Measures	
Non-normed Fit Index (NNFI)	The NNFI is also known as the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI). NNFI assumes values greater than 0 and, contrary to the other indices, it may take values greater than 1 (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). It is recommended that the NNFI level exceeds 0.90 (Button, Mathieu, and Zajac 1996).
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	NFI is a relative comparison of the chi-square of the estimated model to the chi-square of the independence model (Hair et al. 1998). Hair et al. (2006) recommend a value for NFI of 0.90 or greater.
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	CFI values range from 0 to 1 with values near 1 indicating good fit (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). CFI values lower than 0.90 are not <i>usually</i> indicative of a good fit model (Hair et al. 2006). Therefore, in this study values equal or superior to 0.90 will be considered.
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	IFI values range from 0 to 1 and the closer to 1, the better the model fit.

Table 6-2 Description of the Fit Indexes

In this research, the most widely employed absolute, namely χ^2 , GFI and RMSEA, as well as relative goodness-of-fit indexes, in particular GFI, NNFI, CFI and IFI, are reported.

6.6 Summary

In the research methodology chapter, the researcher started by describing the research design, in particular the research setting and the unit of analysis. The research setting is that of the roadside catering industry in the UK, and the unit of analysis is the individual frontline employee in a B2C situation. Subsequently, the development of the survey instrument, which was founded on the literature review and the pre-test of the questionnaire, was explained. Finally, the procedures followed when analysing the data (i.e., construct validity, confirmatory factor analysis and hypothesis testing) were explained.

In the following chapter, the data screening and transformation process that preceded the data analysis will be explained in detail. This is followed by reliability analysis and confirmatory factor analysis results. Finally, the hypotheses proposed in the conceptual framework chapter will be tested through structural equation modelling (SEM), and the final results will be provided.

7 RESEARCH FINDINGS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research results, more specifically the findings resulting from the survey. The researcher starts by executing a rigorous data screening process prior to the data analysis. Next, the data analysis procedure described in section 6.5 of the previous chapter is performed. The software packages used in the analysis are SPSS 14 and LISREL 8.72. More specifically, SPSS 14 was employed during the data screening process and reliability analysis. LISREL 8.72 was used during the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural model stages.

This chapter comprises four additional main sections. Section 7.2 explains the data screening process prior to multivariate data analysis. Analysis of the accuracy of the data file, the missing data process as well as data normality are presented. Section 7.3 describes the demographic characteristics of the sample. In section 7.4 entitled “Data Analysis”, firstly all the research constructs were subjected to reliability analysis. Next, these scales were further tested by employing confirmatory factor analysis. Finally, the outcomes of testing the conceptual model developed in Chapter 5 are presented. Section 7.5 provides a brief summary of the research findings’ chapter.

7.2 Data Screening Prior to Multivariate Data Analysis

The data were subject to a meticulous data screening process before multivariate data analysis was carried out. The researcher started by addressing the issue of accuracy of the data file. Next, the assessment of missing data and the way to deal with it were discussed. Finally, an additional check was carried out to investigate the assumption of data normality underlying multivariate data analysis.

7.2.1 Accuracy of the data file

In order to assess the accuracy of a large data file²⁰, it is necessary to analyse the descriptive statistics and the graphic representation of the variables (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). Following the authors' suggestion, errors in data entry were detected by examining out-of-range values, the reasonability of means and standard deviations as well as univariate outliers. The graphical examination of the variables was based on stem-and-leaf plots, histograms, boxplots and scatterplot matrices²¹. Some cases, more specifically nineteen, were identified as being outliers since these were not part of the population being sampled (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). The nineteen ineligible cases corresponded to individuals who stated that their current position was one of the following: assistant manager, manager, storeman, administrative staff and cleaner. In addition, forty-five observations were excluded from further analysis since the individual had worked for the company for less than

²⁰ This study's initial sample is 839.

²¹ Boxplots allow identifying outliers (Hair et al. 2006) while scatterplot matrices provide information on the relationship between variables.

three months. Finally, based on the variable *proportion* - of time in contact with customers- seven cases in which the individual spent 0% of his/her time in contact with customers were dropped (Hartline and Ferrell 1996). At this stage, 768 cases remained.

7.2.2 Missing Data

The purpose of the second phase was to assess the amount and distribution of the missing data and subsequently, to tackle the problem (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). In this study, the four-step approach suggested by Hair et al. (2006) was followed: 1st) identify the missing data processes (i.e., ignorable vs non-ignorable); 2nd) determine the extent of missing data; 3rd) assess the randomness of the missing data processes and 4th) select the imputation process.

As in most cases, this study's missing data is classified as not ignorable. Among these non-ignorable missing data processes, numerous are known to the researcher since these are the result of procedural factors, such as errors in data entry that cause invalid codes, non-completion of the whole questionnaire, or the respondent's morbidity, etc (Hair et al. 2006).

In the second step, while determining the extent of the missing data, non-ignorable missing data processes were addressed immediately. As such, any errors in data entry that were detected were corrected. Moreover, twenty-seven cases were deleted due to failure to complete the entire questionnaire. Only the cases that had less than 30% of missing data were considered for further analysis, the rest of the cases

(twenty-seven) were withdrawn (see Hair et al 1998). One case in which the morbidity of the respondent was evident - the respondent ticked only the neutral option across the entire questionnaire- was removed. Ultimately, the sample comprised 740 cases.

The third step consisted of diagnosing the randomness of the missing data processes. Following an examination of the missing data patterns, two diagnostic tests for levels of randomness were carried out (Hair et al. 2006). The first test evaluated the missing data process of a particular variable Y by comparing two groups, one comprising observations with missing values for Y and the other constituted by observations with valid values of Y . The second was an overall test of randomness.

The first diagnostic test revealed significant differences between the two groups for a few variables, suggesting a possible nonrandom missing data process. In relation to the 2nd test, i.e., the overall test of randomness (Little's MCAR test), the hypothesis that the missing data processes are MCAR (Missing Completely At Random) was rejected. As a result of these two tests, the missing data process was classified as MAR (Missing At Random) which reflects a nonrandom component.

The fourth step was related to the selection of the imputation method. Since the missing data process in this study was categorised as MAR, the only remedy for missing data is the modelling-based approach. More specifically, the EM approach was applied. EM is "an iterative two-stage method (the E and M stages) in which the E stage makes the best possible estimates of the missing data and the M stage

then makes estimates of the parameters (means, standard deviations, or correlations) assuming the missing data were replaced. The process continues going through the two stages until the change in the estimated values is negligible and they replace the missing data.” (Hair et al. 2006, p. 58).

7.2.3 Normality

The most important statistical assumption in multivariate analysis is normality. All the fifty-three variables included in the model were assessed in terms of normality.

In line with Hair et al.’s (2006) suggestion, a graphical analysis of normality was performed through a visual inspection of the histogram, normal probability plot and detrended expected normality plot. The normal probability plot is particularly useful in order to detect departures from normality in terms of kurtosis and skewness. In addition to graphical analysis, the researcher conducted the following statistical tests of normality: 1) a test founded on the statistical values of both skewness and kurtosis (z-values) and 2) the Kolmogorov- Smirnov test. By combining both graphical analysis and the statistical tests of normality, several variables were identified as non-normal and subsequently these were subject to transformations in order to achieve normality. All possible transformations, namely the inverse, the square root and the logarithm were applied to the non-normal variables (Hair et al. 1998). After transformation, only four variables improved significantly in terms of normality; these four items became normally or near-normally distributed (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). Despite the improvement in terms of normality, the problem associated with transforming these four indicators

is that the transformed variable would be included in a scale in which the remaining items would be in their original form. In addition to this issue, it is argued that transformation when the scale is already published and widely employed may hinder interpretation (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). Finally, since this study comprises 740 cases - a large sample size-, the negative effects of nonnormality tend to diminish (Hair et al. 2006). Anchored in the aforementioned reasons, the final decision of not transforming any variable was taken.

The Generally Weighted Least Squares (WLS²²) estimation technique does not make any assumption regarding the distribution of the observed variables (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000), in particular does not presuppose multivariate normality (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). Therefore, in order to address the issue of non-normal data, WLS estimation was employed in the confirmatory measurement model and structural equation modeling (SEM) stages.

7.3 Profile of the Sample

Following the data screening process, the sample comprised 740 valid cases. In terms of *gender*, 446 frontline employees were female (60.3%) and 275 are male (37.4%)²³. Regarding the *age* of the respondents, 72 (9.7%) individuals were younger than or 17 years old; 303 (40.9%) respondents were between 18 and 24 years old; 112 (15.1%) were between 25 and 29 years old; 102 (13.8%) were within

²² WLS is a full-information technique as well as an iterative procedure (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000).

²³ 19 respondents (2.6%) did not answer this question.

the age range from 30 to 39; 67 persons (9.1%) were between 40 and 49 years old; and finally, 58 (7.8%) people were aged above 49²⁴.

Concerning the highest level of *education* completed by the respondents, 126 (17%) had GCSE passes, 135 (18.2%) selected the NVQ option and 138 (18.6%) completed the A-levels. Fifty people (6.8%) had no qualification and fifteen (2%) had a Master's degree. In terms of *work status*, 418 (56.5%) employees are employed full-time and 273 (36.9%) are employed part-time. On average, they spent 76% of their time in contact with customers.

With regard to the average *tenure*, frontline employees had been working in the catering industry for approximately 5 years and five months, for the company for 3 years and a half, and for the unit for 3 years and five months. They had been working for the current Department Manager for 1 year and nine months on average.

7.4 Data Analysis

7.4.1 Reliability Analysis

Previous research has widely suggested that the level of adequacy for coefficient alpha is 0.70 (Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003). The results of this study in terms of the cronbach alpha test (Cronbach 1951) reveal a high internal reliability

²⁴ There is missing data for 26 cases (3.5%).

for all scales. The value of cronbach alpha ranges from 0.815 for the Emotional Exhaustion scale to 0.951 for the Organisational Commitment scale. Table 7.1 shows the cronbach alpha value for each construct of this study. All the items comprising each construct were incorporated.

Construct		Items Included	Cronbach's alpha n= 740
Perceived Organisational Support	POS1	[Company's name] values my contribution to its well-being.	0.898
	POS2	[Company's name] fails to appreciate any extra effort from me (R).	
	POS3	[Company's name] would ignore any complaint from me (R).	
	POS4	[Company's name] really cares about my well-being.	
	POS5	Even if I did the best job possible, [company's name] would fail to notice (R).	
	POS6	[Company's name] cares about my general satisfaction at work.	
	POS7	[Company's name] shows very little concern for me (R).	
	POS8	[Company's name] takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	
Learning Goal Orientation Mastery Orientation			0.910
	MO1	I feel <i>successful</i> on my job when... ... I acquire new knowledge or learn a new skill by trying hard.	
	MO2	... I acquire new knowledge or master a new skill which was difficult for me in the past.	
	MO3	... I learn something that motivates me to continue.	
	MO4	... I feel I am improving.	
	MO5	... I learn something that makes me want to practice more.	
	MO6	... I learn something new that is fun to do.	
	MO7	... I get the maximum out of myself.	
	MO8	... I improve on particular aspects.	
	MO9	... I master new knowledge or a new skill.	

Construct	Items Included		Cronbach's alpha n= 740
Personal Learning			
<i>Relational Job Learning</i>			0.819
	PL1	I have learned about how another department functions.	
	PL2	I have increased my knowledge about [company's name] as a whole.	
	PL3	I have learned about other people's perceptions about me or my job.	
	PL4	I have increased my understanding of issues and problems outside my job.	
	PL5	I better understand how my job or department affects others.	
	PL6	I have a better understanding of organisational politics.	
<i>Personal Skill Development</i>			0.862
	PL7	I have learned how to communicate effectively with other people.	
	PL8	I have improved my listening skills.	
	PL9	I have developed new ideas about how to perform my job.	
	PL10	I have become more sensitive to other people's feelings and attitudes.	
	PL11	I have gained new skills.	
	PL12	I have expanded the way I think about things.	
Psychological Job Outcomes			
Job Satisfaction			0.839
	JS1	Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.	
	JS2	I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.	
	JS3	Each day at work seems like it will never end (R).	
	JS4	I find real enjoyment in my work.	
	JS5	I consider my job rather unpleasant (R).	
<i>Organisational Commitment</i>			0.951
	OC1	I talk up [company's name] to my friends as a great organisation to work for.	
	OC2	I find that my values and [company's name]'s values are very similar.	
	OC3	I am proud to tell others that I am a part of [company's name].	
	OC4	[Company's name] inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	
	OC5	I am extremely glad I chose [company's name] to work for over other companies I was considering at the time.	
	OC6	For me, [company's name] is the best of all possible organisations to work for.	

Construct	Items Included		Cronbach's alpha n= 740
Emotional Exhaustion	EE1	I feel emotionally drained by my work.	0.815
	EE2	I do not feel used up at the end of the workday (R).	
	EE3	I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	
	EE4	I feel burned out from my job.	
	EE5	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	
	EE6	I feel frustrated by my job.	
	EE7	In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.	
	EE8	I feel like I am at the end of my tether.	
Service Recovery Performance			0.818
	SRP1	Considering all the things I do, I handle dissatisfied customers quite well.	
	SRP2	I don't mind dealing with complaining customers.	
	SRP3	I do not let any customer I deal with leave with problems unresolved.	
	SRP4	Satisfying complaining customers is a great thrill to me.	
	SRP5	Complaining customers I have dealt with in the past are among today's most loyal customers.	

(R) Reversed items

Table 7-1 Cronbach Alpha of Each Construct of the Study

7.4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis²⁵

In this section the constructs of perceived organisational support, mastery orientation, personal learning (2 dimensions), job satisfaction, organisational commitment, emotional exhaustion and service recovery performance were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

²⁵ An alternative title for this section is Confirmatory Measurement Models.

The analyses were conducted as based on the covariance matrix and the asymptotic covariance matrix. In view of the fact that the sample size is large ($N = 740$) (Anderson and Gerbing 1988) and the data are not normally distributed, Generally Weighted Least Squares (WLS) was employed as the estimation procedure (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). As previously discussed, the imputation of the MAR missing data process was carried out through the expectation maximisation (EM) procedure.

The measurement models were estimated and re-estimated by analysing the significance of the loadings of each indicator (t -values superior to $|1.96|$) and each item's squared multiple correlation (R^2)²⁶. In addition to the examination of individual items, it was necessary to assess the composite reliability (ρ_η) and the average percentage of variance extracted (VE) of each construct. The formulas are as follows (Hair et al. 1998; Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000):

$$\rho_\eta = \frac{(\sum \lambda)^2}{(\sum \lambda)^2 + \sum (\theta)}$$

$$VE = \frac{\sum \lambda^2}{\sum \lambda^2 + \sum (\theta)}$$

Where,

λ = standardised indicator loadings

θ = measurement error variances (i.e, variance of ϵ s)

\sum = summation of the indicators of the latent variables

²⁶ No cutoff value has been established for R^2 in multiple regression (Hair et al. 2006). In this study, the researcher established 0.30 as the cutoff value.

A ρ_η of 0.7 or higher is indicative of good reliability (Hair et al. 2006) and a VE of 0.5 or higher suggests adequate convergence (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

The modification indices provided by the programme (LISREL 8.72) were crucial in the process of re-estimating the model to achieve the values required for 1st) each item in terms of t-values and R^2 and 2nd) for each construct, in particular ρ_η and VE as well as 3rd) a good model fit. As suggested by several authors (e.g. Wheaton 1987), various fit indices were employed to assess the fit of each measurement model. The model fit was evaluated based on six indicators: chi-square statistic (χ^2), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Incremental Fit Index (IFI). For a detailed explanation on each individual index see table 6.2.

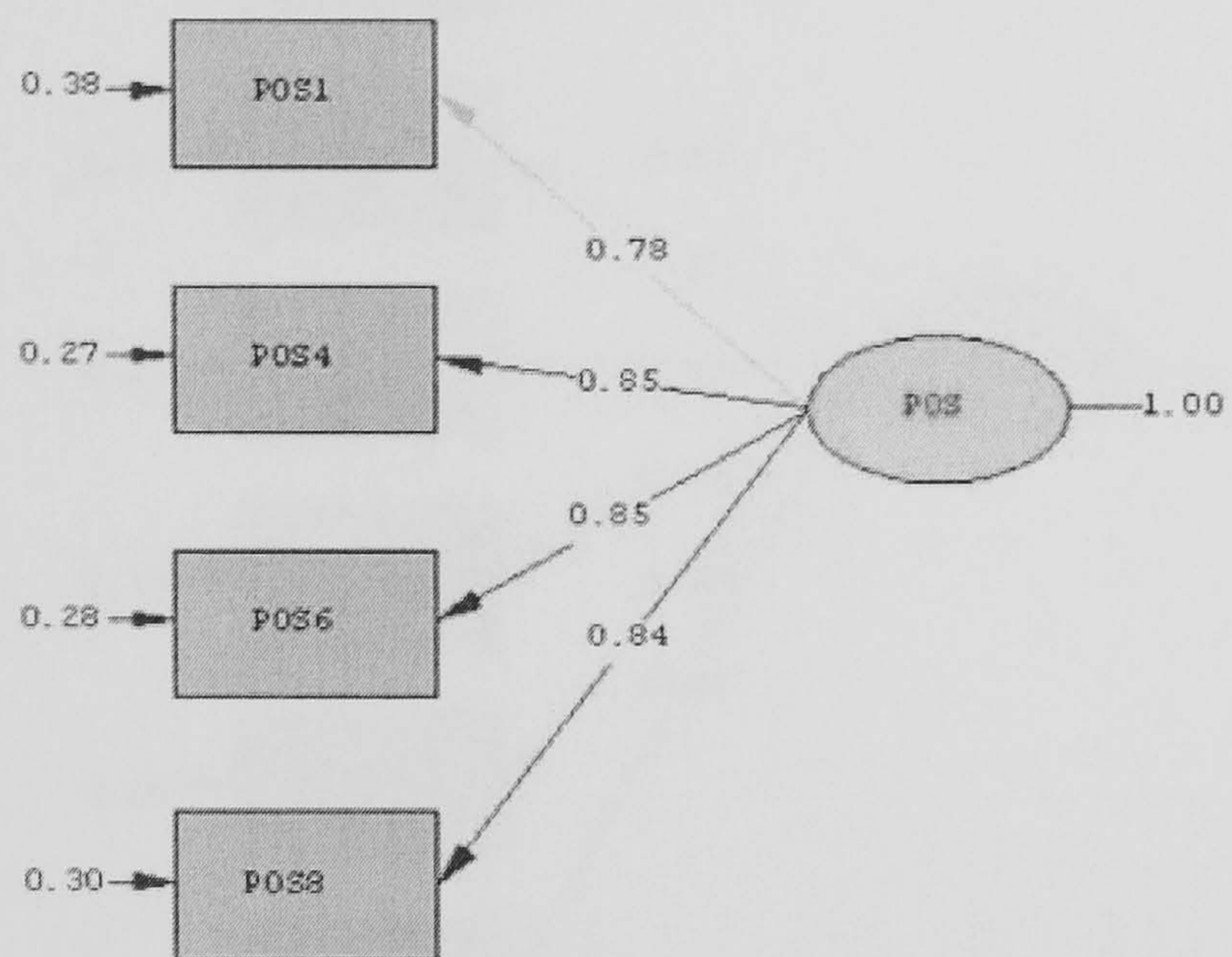
Table 7.2 below presents the CFA results, namely standardised factor loadings²⁷, t-values, R^2 , ρ_η , VE and the model fit for each construct. Two examples of the LISREL output for perceived organisational support and organisational commitment are depicted in Figure 7.1 and 7.2.

²⁷ Factor loadings represent the correlation between the observed variables and the factors (Hair et al. 2006).

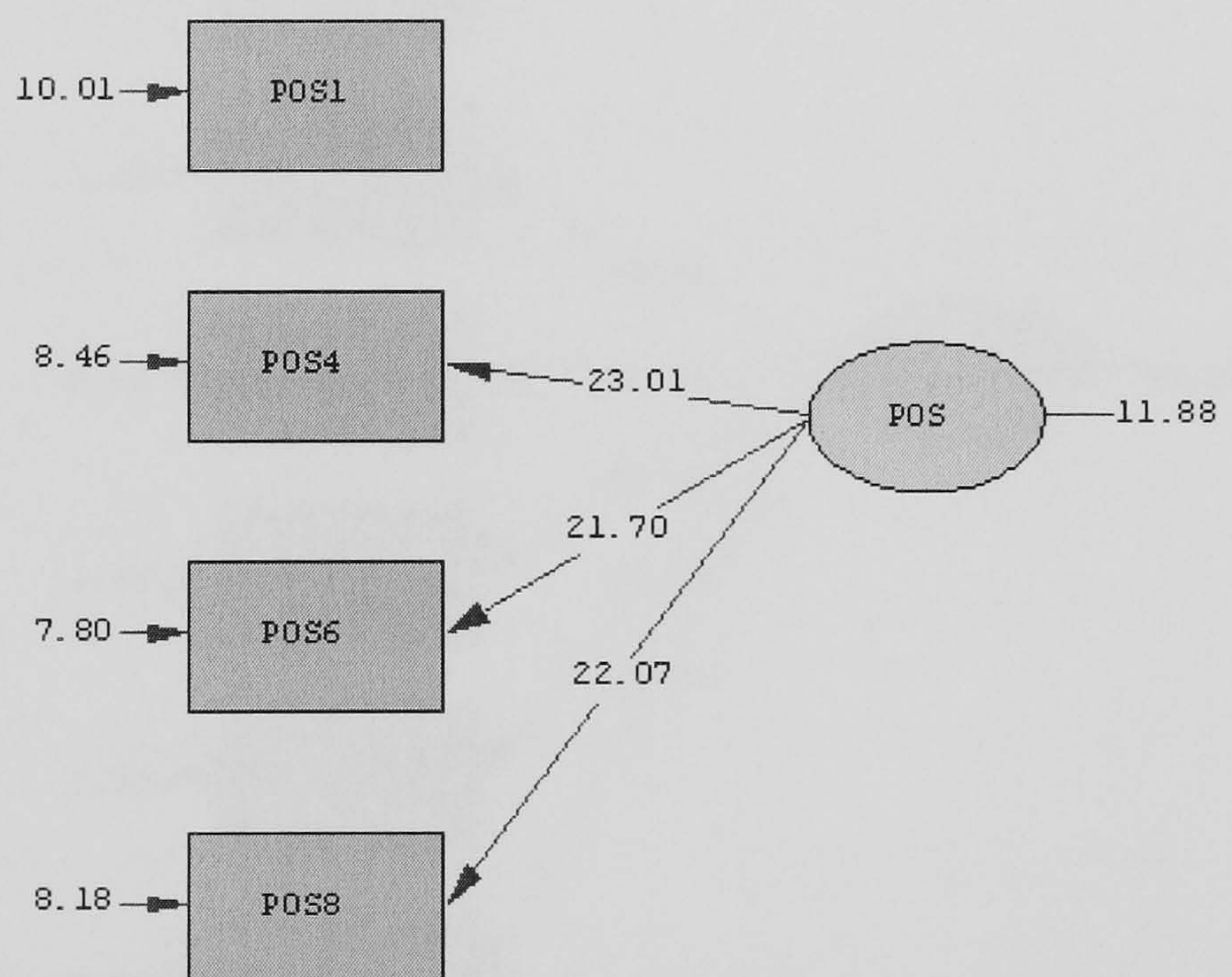
Construct	Items	Standardised Factor Loading	t-value	R ²	ρ_{η}	VE
Perceived Organisational Support					0.9	0.69
	POS1	0.78	-	0.62		
	POS4	0.85	23.01	0.73		
	POS6	0.85	21.70	0.72		
	POS8	0.84	22.07	0.70		
Model fit: $\chi^2= 5.95$; GFI = 0.99; NNFI = 0.97; CFI = 0.99; IFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.052						
Mastery Orientation					0.89	0.53
	MO2	0.62	-	0.39		
	MO5	0.76	16.87	0.58		
	MO6	0.73	16.44	0.54		
	MO7	0.74	13.22	0.55		
	MO8	0.77	15.84	0.59		
	MO9	0.85	16.65	0.72		
Model fit: $\chi^2= 19.09$; GFI = 0.98; NNFI = 0.93; CFI = 0.96; IFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.039						
Personal Learning					0.87	0.50
	PL3	0.62	-	0.39		
	PL5	0.63	12.81	0.39		
	PL8	0.75	13.6	0.56		
	PL9	0.75	13.88	0.56		
	PL10	0.73	13.37	0.53		
	PL11	0.64	13.36	0.42		
	PL12	0.80	15.85	0.63		
Model fit: $\chi^2= 34.68$; GFI = 0.96; NNFI = 0.89; CFI = 0.93; IFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.045						
Job Satisfaction					0.85	0.60
	JS1	0.85	-	0.72		
	JS2	0.83	21.54	0.69		
	JS4	0.82	22.91	0.67		
	JS5	0.56	14.31	0.32		
Model fit: $\chi^2= 4.75$; GFI = 1; NNFI = 0.97; CFI = 0.99; IFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.043						
Organisational Commitment					0.96	0.77
	OC1	0.86	-	0.75		
	OC2	0.85	32.36	0.73		
	OC3	0.94	43.44	0.88		
	OC4	0.90	35.88	0.82		
	OC5	0.90	33.80	0.80		
	OC6	0.90	37.49	0.81		
Model fit: $\chi^2= 46.90$; GFI = 0.96; NNFI = 0.89; CFI = 0.93; IFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.075						

Construct	Items	Standardised Factor Loading	t-value	R ²	ρ_{η}	VE
Emotional Exhaustion					0.91	0.64
	EE1	0.82	-	0.68		
	EE3	0.79	25.37	0.62		
	EE4	0.87	31.69	0.76		
	EE5	0.71	20.46	0.51		
	EE6	0.81	28.17	0.65		
	EE8	0.78	26.05	0.61		
Model fit: $\chi^2 = 23.97$; GFI = 0.99; NNFI = 0.95; CFI = 0.97; IFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.047						
Service Recovery Performance					0.82	0.53
	SRP1	0.69	-	0.48		
	SRP2	0.80	14.11	0.65		
	SRP3	0.82	13.65	0.67		
	SRP4	0.58	10.88	0.34		
Model fit: $\chi^2 = 10.98$; GFI = 0.99; NNFI = 0.90; CFI = 0.97; IFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.078						

Table 7-2 CFA Results for Each Individual Construct

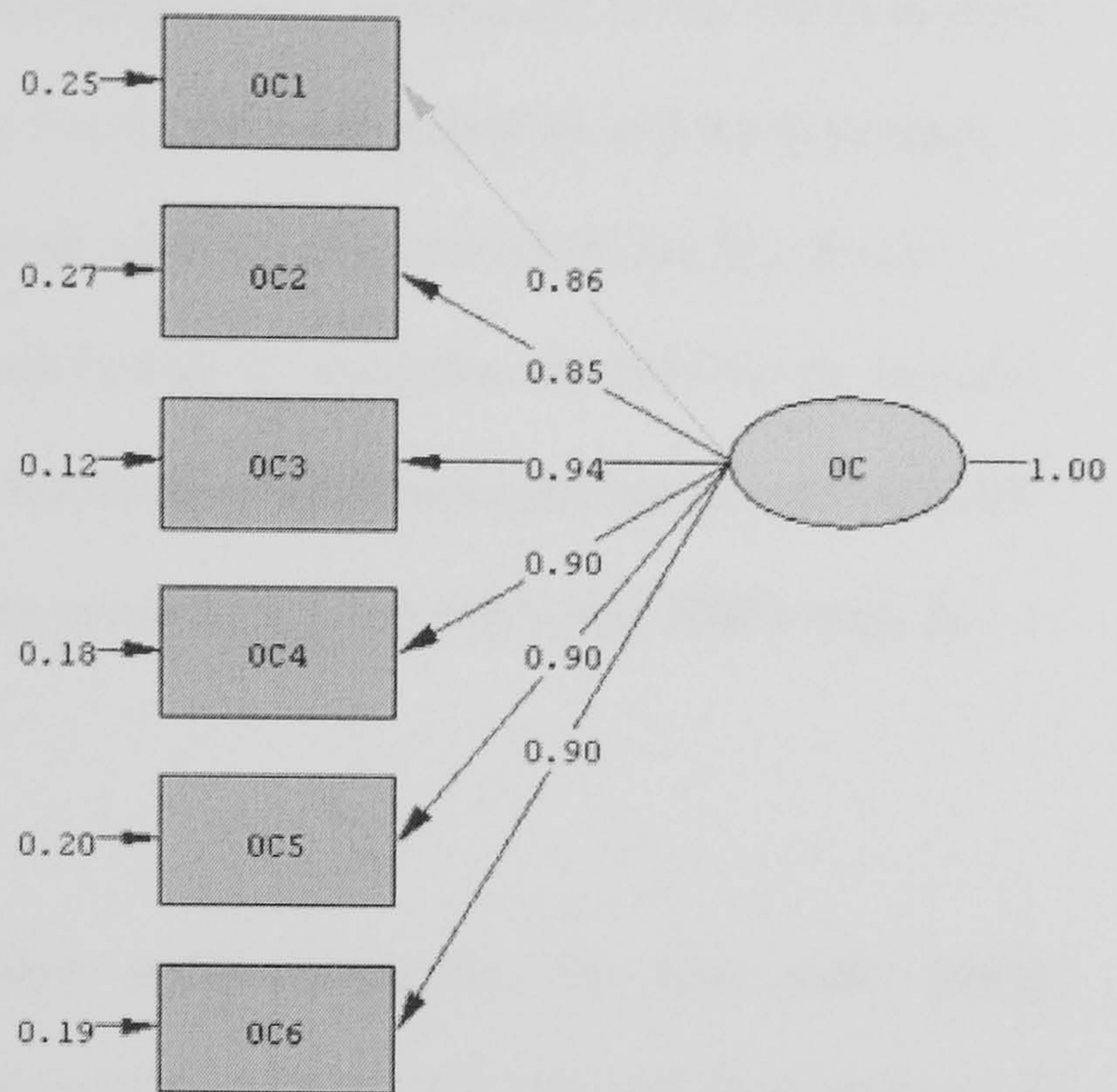


Chi-Square=5.95, df=2, P-value=0.05100, RMSEA=0.052

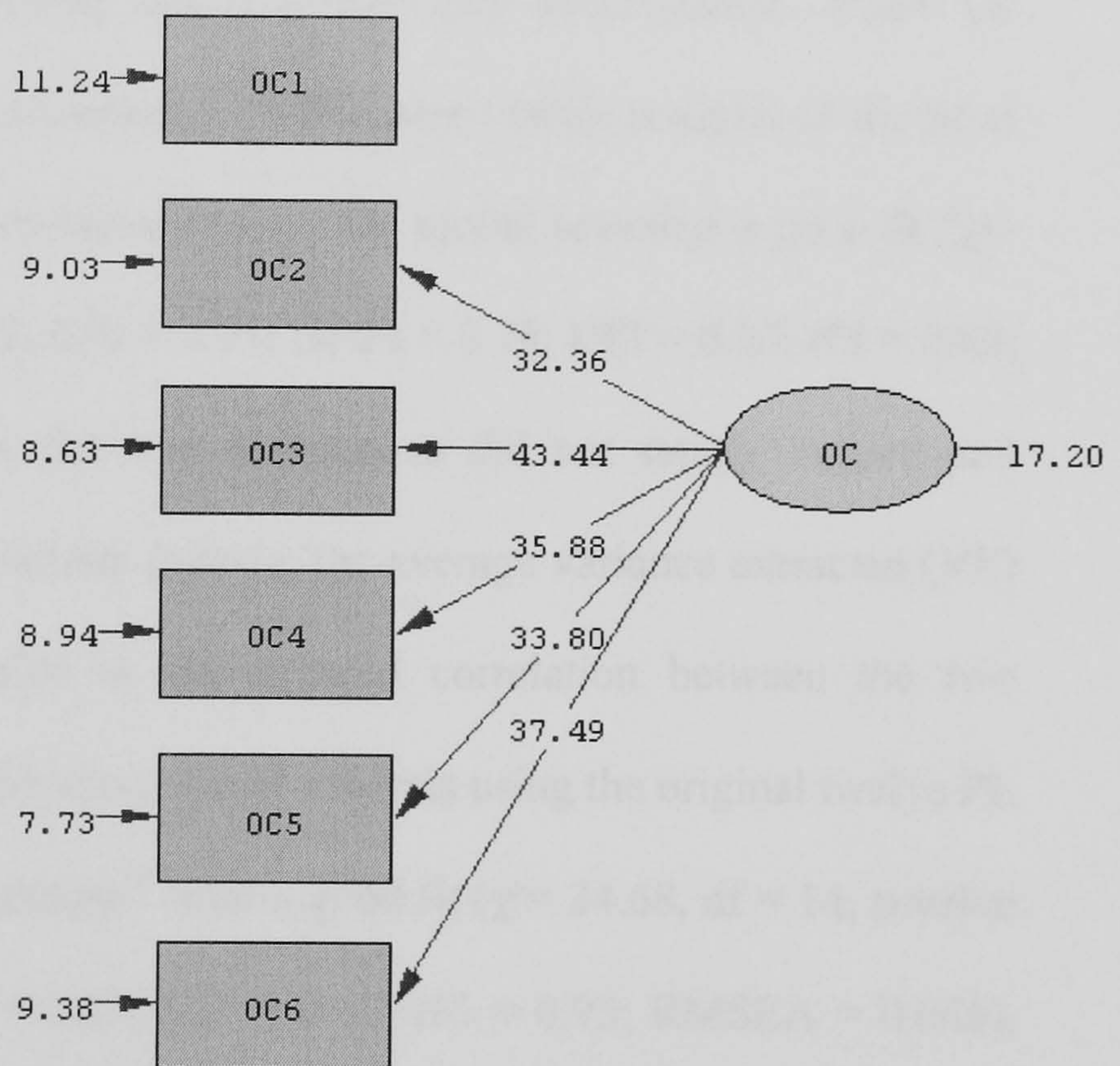


Chi-Square=5.95, df=2, P-value=0.05100, RMSEA=0.052

Figure 7-1: Standardised Factor Loadings and t-values for POS



Chi-Square=46.90, df=9, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.075



Chi-Square=46.90, df=9, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.075

Figure 7-2: Standardised Factor Loadings and t-values for OC

Every single construct satisfied the requirements in terms of: 1) the t-value of each indicator; 2) the R^2 for each item; 3) the composite reliability and the 4) average variance extracted for each construct. In terms of model fit, all the fit indexes presented values indicative of good fit with the exception of NNFI for the Personal Learning and Organisational Commitment scales which assumes the value of 0.89. Nevertheless, in line with previous research (e.g. Jap 1999), this NNFI value is considered acceptable.

CFA was also used to assess unidimensionality. In line with theory, unidimensionality was confirmed for POS, MO, JS, OC, EE and SRP. With regard to the variable PL, theory suggests that this construct is composed by two dimensions: relational job learning and personal skill development. When the researcher used LISREL 8.72 to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis of the fit of the data to the hypothesised two-factor model, the model revealed a poor fit ($\chi^2=109.37$, $df=43$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$; $GFI=0.93$; $NNFI=0.78$; $CFI=0.83$; $IFI=0.83$; $RMSEA=0.046$). In addition, the two dimensions did not satisfy Fornell and Larcker's (1981) discriminant validity criteria: the average variance extracted (VE) for each dimension was inferior to the squared correlation between the two dimensions²⁸. Therefore, a confirmatory factor analysis using the original twelve PL items resulted in a one-factor solution²⁹ with a good fit ($\chi^2=34.68$, $df=14$, $p\text{-value}=0.00164$; $GFI=0.96$; $NNFI=0.89$; $CFI=0.93$; $IFI=0.93$; $RMSEA=0.045$), which refuted the a priori classification of the PL items into two dimensions, the relational job learning and personal skill development categories.

²⁸ The correlation between the two dimensions was 0.84.

²⁹ This one-factor solution comprised 7 items (PL3, PL5, PL8, PL9, PL10, PL11 and PL12).

In addition, cronbach alphas (Cronbach 1951) were calculated for each scale. Coefficient alphas were acceptable for each construct: 0.894 for POS, 0.866 for MO, 0.856 for PL, 0.843 for JS, 0.951 for OC, 0.905 for EE and 0.803 for SRP.

The seven abovementioned constructs were included in a measurement model and the initial CFA results indicated that the model did not fit the data well ($\chi^2=5097.07$, $df = 608$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$; $GFI = 0.94$; $NNFI = 0.82$; $CFI = 0.83$; $IFI = 0.83$; $RMSEA = 0.100$). To improve the model fit, the researcher run confirmatory factor analysis initially with two constructs (POS and PL), and afterwards one construct was added at a time. During this refinement process, the assessment of the model fit as well as of other indicators, namely t -values, R^2 , composite reliability (ρ_η) and average percentage of variance extracted (VE), was performed. In total, thirteen items (POS1, MO5, MO6, MO9, PL10, PL11, JS1, JS5, OC4, OC6, EE3, EE5, EE8) were dropped. The final seven-factor model comprising twenty-four items fits the data reasonably well ($\chi^2= 423.41$; $df = 231$; $p\text{-value} = 0.000$; $GFI = 0.92$; $NNFI = 0.88^{30}$; $CFI = 0.90$; $IFI = 0.90$; $RMSEA = 0.034$). The path coefficients - and the errors - are statistically significant (t -values > 1.96). Also the coefficients of determination (R^2) are all above 0.30. Composite reliability values are acceptable (i.e., 0.93 for POS; 0.86 for PL; 0.76 for MO; 0.82 for JS; 0.94 for OC; 0.88 for EE; 0.87 for SRP) as well as the VE values for all constructs (i.e., 0.81 for POS; 0.56 for PL; 0.52 for MO; 0.70 for JS; 0.81 for OC; 0.70 for EE; 0.63 for SRP). The cronbach alphas (Cronbach 1951) for the refined constructs were acceptable: 0.878 for POS, 0.721 for MO, 0.811 for PL, 0.799 for JS, 0.926 for OC, 0.857 for EE and 0.803 for SRP.

³⁰ In line with previous studies (e.g. Jap, 1999), $NNFI = 0.88$ is an acceptable value.

Finally, validity tests were carried out for the measures. CFA results provide evidence of discriminant validity for every single construct. The average variance extracted (VE) for each construct was superior to the squared correlation between that construct and any other construct (Fornell and Larcker 1981). In order to assess convergent validity, the magnitude, as well as the statistical significance (*t*-values) of the factor loading estimates, were examined (see Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994; Hair et al. 2006). As previously pointed out, all the path coefficients were highly significant and all loadings were at least 0.5, and with the exception of MO2 and PL3, all the other loadings were above the preferable value of 0.7 (Hair et al. 2006). Thus, all constructs possess good psychometric properties, namely high internal consistency reliability as well as evidence for convergent and discriminant validity. Ultimately, these twenty-four items were retained for further analysis.

Table 7.3 provides information on the overall measurement model fit as well as standardised factor loadings, *t*-values, R^2 , ρ_{η} and VE.

Construct	Items	Standardised Factor Loading	T-values	R ²	ρ_{η}	VE
Perceived Organisational Support					0.93	0.81
	POS4	0.88	-	0.77		
	POS6	0.92	41.62	0.85		
	POS8	0.90	40.64	0.80		
Mastery Orientation					0.76	0.52
	MO2	0.59	-	0.35		
	MO7	0.71	16.07	0.50		
	MO8	0.85	17.04	0.72		
Personal Learning					0.86	0.56
	PL3	0.60	-	0.35		
	PL5	0.71	18.67	0.51		
	PL8	0.77	17.07	0.59		
	PL9	0.81	17.74	0.65		
	PL12	0.82	17.78	0.67		
Job Satisfaction					0.82	0.70
	JS2	0.81	-	0.65		
	JS4	0.86	27.67	0.74		
Organisational Commitment					0.94	0.81
	OC1	0.89	-	0.79		
	OC2	0.91	47.54	0.82		
	OC3	0.92	57.36	0.84		
	OC5	0.89	49.08	0.79		
Emotional Exhaustion					0.88	0.70
	EE1	0.79	-	0.63		
	EE4	0.86	31.44	0.74		
	EE6	0.86	30.58	0.74		
Service Recovery Performance					0.87	0.63
	SRP1	0.78	-	0.60		
	SRP2	0.77	25.22	0.60		
	SRP3	0.87	26.17	0.75		
	SRP4	0.74	20.35	0.55		
Model fit: $\chi^2 = 423.41$; GFI = 0.92; NNFI = 0.88; CFI = 0.90; IFI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.034						

Table 7-3 Overall Measurement Model

In summary, in this section the CFA results for each specific construct and for the overall measurement model were reported. Based on tables 7.2 and 7.3, each construct’s individual model as well as the overall measurement model present a good fit based on indicators such as the chi-square statistic (χ^2), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI),

Incremental Fit Index (IFI) as well as Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). In addition, the path coefficients - and the errors- are statistically significant ($t > |1.96|$). Also all the coefficients of determination (R^2) are above 0.30. Finally, the CFA results provide evidence of convergent validity as well as discriminant validity.

Based on the CFA analysis, in particular the discriminant analysis, the two hypothesised dimensions of learning goal orientation, namely personal learning and mastery orientation, emerged as two distinct measures that must be investigated separately. Therefore, several new sub-hypotheses resulting from the division of learning goal orientation into personal learning and mastery orientation came forward.

Hypothesis 1 that argues that perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with learning goal orientation is now divided into two:

H1a: Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with personal learning.

H1b: Perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with mastery orientation.

Hypothesis 2 (i.e., learning goal orientation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction) gives origin to H2a and H2b:

H2a: Personal learning will have a positive relationship with job

satisfaction.

H2b: Mastery orientation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 8 which suggests that learning goal orientation will have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion is now divided into H8a and H8b:

H8a: Personal learning will have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion.

H8b: Mastery orientation will have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 13 which argues that learning goal orientation will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance is now divided into H13a and H13b:

H13a: Personal learning will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.

H13b: Mastery orientation will have a positive relationship with service recovery performance.

Finally, in the conceptual framework chapter, no relationship between personal learning and mastery orientation was hypothesised. At that stage, it was believed that both concepts measured learning goal orientation, and eventually, in the data analysis phase, both would merge into a unique construct reflecting the learning goal orientation concept.

Nevertheless, despite not being hypothesised in the conceptual framework chapter, based on the discriminant analysis' results, personal learning and mastery orientation emerge as two distinct measures. Consequently, the two constructs must be investigated separately. For this reason, a new hypothesis that establishes the relationship between both concepts is expected to emerge. This hypothesis will be named H14:

H14: Personal learning will have a positive relationship with mastery orientation.

7.5 Structural Model

The researcher employed the SEM (i.e., structural equation modelling) approach to test the hypotheses using LISREL 8.72 (Joreskog and Sorbom 1996-2001). Hair et al. (2006) argue that three specific features justify the selection of SEM versus other multivariate techniques. First, the model to be estimated is complex, comprising multiple and interconnected dependence relationships. Second, SEM allows latent concepts in the abovementioned relationships to be represented, whilst simultaneously correcting for the estimation's measurement error. Third, all the relationships (equations) in a model are estimated simultaneously. The structural model was estimated using WLS³¹.

The structural model presented in Figure 7.3 presents a chi-square (χ^2) of 320.05 (df = 171, p-value = 0.000). Hair et al. (2006) point out that the limitation of the χ^2

³¹ The reason for using the WLS estimation procedure has been explained previously.

statistic is that it increases when the sample size (N) increases and the number of observed variables increases. In other words, there is a bias versus large samples and augmented model complexity. Based on the abovementioned limitation, the authors argue that the χ^2 statistic should not be used as the single measure of a SEM fit. Therefore, additional measures were employed to assess the model fit, namely RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index), NNFI (Non-Normed Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index) and IFI (Incremental Fit Index). The RMSEA value of 0.034 indicates a good model fit (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw 2000). The CFI, IFI and GFI values of 0.91, 0.91 and 0.92 respectively are also indicative of a good model fit. In line with previous research (e.g. Jap 1999), an NNFI of 0.89 is acceptable. In conclusion, all of these indices suggest a good fit of the model to the data. In addition to the overall fit indices, the R^2 value for each structural equation was estimated in order to assess the explanatory power of the structural equations

7.5.1 Determinants of Learning Goal Orientation

7.5.1.1 Determinant of Personal Learning

H1a suggests that personal learning is positively influenced by perceived organisational support. This hypothesis is supported by SEM results. The estimated parameter of 0.43 is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$. Based on the R^2 , it may be concluded that perceived organisational support explains 19% of the total variation of personal learning.

7.5.1.2 Determinants of Mastery Orientation

The antecedents of mastery orientation (i.e., perceived organisational support and personal learning) explain 52% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.52$). H1b is supported and H14 is *strongly* supported. The parameter estimates for H1b (i.e., 0.20) as well as for H14 (i.e., 0.62) are significant at the 1% level. Both perceived organisational support and personal learning have a positive impact on mastery orientation.

7.5.2 *Determinants of Psychological Job Outcomes*

7.5.2.1 Determinants of Job Satisfaction

Seventy percent of the variance in job satisfaction is explained by its determinants, namely personal learning, mastery orientation, perceived organisational support and emotional exhaustion ($R^2 = 0.70$). All the hypotheses (H2a, H2b, H3 and H4) that considered job satisfaction as a consequence were supported by the results. While personal learning, mastery orientation and perceived organisational support have a positive effect on job satisfaction (estimated parameter = 0.20, $p < 0.01$; estimated parameter = 0.13, $p < 0.05$; estimated parameter = 0.54, $p < 0.01$, respectively), emotional exhaustion has a negative impact (estimated parameter = -0.16, $p < 0.01$).

7.5.2.2 Determinants of Organisational Commitment

The three antecedents of organisational commitment explain 74% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.74$). The three hypotheses (H5, H6 and H7) are supported. While there is a negative effect of emotional exhaustion on organisational commitment (estimated parameter = -0.09, $p < 0.01$), there is a positive one of perceived organisational support (estimated parameter = 0.48, $p < 0.01$) and job satisfaction (estimated parameter = 0.37, $p < 0.01$) on organisational commitment.

7.5.2.3 Determinants of Emotional Exhaustion

The greatest surprises occurred for the antecedents of emotional exhaustion. Personal learning and mastery orientation were hypothesised to have a negative impact on emotional exhaustion (H8a, H8b). Nevertheless, non-significant effects of personal learning (estimated parameter = -0.03, $p < 0.01$) and mastery orientation (estimated parameter = -0.09, $p < 0.01$) on emotional exhaustion were found. In relation to perceived organisational support, H9 is strongly supported. The parameter estimate for H9 (i.e., -0.55) is significant at 1% level.

7.5.3 *Determinants of Service Recovery Performance*

Forty seven percent of the total variation of service recovery performance is explained by its five antecedents ($R^2 = 0.47$), namely personal learning, mastery orientation, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion.

Three out of five hypotheses regarding the determinants of service recovery performance were supported (H11, H13a, H13b). Hypotheses 10 and 12 were refuted. Job satisfaction was found to have a negative impact on service recovery performance while emotional emotion revealed a positive effect on service recovery performance.

The structural model results for the 18 hypotheses are reported in Table 7.4. Estimated parameters with a t-value $> |1.645|$ are significant at the 10% level ($p < 0.10$), with a t-value $> |1.96|$ are significant at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$) and with a t-value $> |2.58|$ are significant at the 1% level ($p < 0.01$). Out of the eighteen hypotheses, fourteen were supported³², two were found non-significant and two were refuted.

The parameter estimates for the structural model are reported in Figure 7.3. Dotted lines denote new relationships.

Given the evidence of convergent validity, discriminant validity (see 7.4.2 section) and nomological validity, it may be concluded that all measures exhibited construct validity.

³² In other words, all of the parameters were in the hypothesised direction.

	Hypothesis	Expected Sign	Estimated Parameter	Standard Error	t-value	Assessment	R ²
Personal learning							0.19
Perceived organisational support	H1a	+	0.43***	0.021	9.25	+ S	
Mastery orientation							0.52
Perceived organisational support	H1b	+	0.20***	0.018	3.97	+ S	
Personal Learning	H14	+	0.62***	0.050	9.93	+ S	
Job satisfaction							0.70
Personal learning	H2a	+	0.20***	0.089	3.13	+ S	
Mastery orientation	H2b	+	0.13**	0.11	2.04	+ S	
Perceived organisational support	H3	+	0.54***	0.031	10.94	+ S	
Emotional exhaustion	H4	-	- 0.16***	0.036	- 3.86	- S	
Organisational commitment							0.74
Perceived organisational Support	H5	+	0.48***	0.060	8.72	+ S	
Job Satisfaction	H6	+	0.37***	0.099	6.59	+ S	
Emotional exhaustion	H7	-	- 0.09***	0.053	-2.77	- S	
Emotional exhaustion							0.37
Personal learning	H8a	-	- 0.03	0.087	- 0.53	ns	
Mastery Orientation	H8b	-	- 0.09	0.12	- 1.37	ns	
Perceived Organisational Support	H9	-	- 0.55***	0.031	- 12.5	- S	
Service Recovery Performance							0.47
Job satisfaction	H10	+	- 0.19**	0.094	- 2.27	- R	
Organisational commitment	H11	+	0.29***	0.043	4.22	+ S	
Emotional exhaustion	H12	-	0.08**	0.043	1.78	+ R	
Personal learning	H13a	+	0.49***	0.12	6.29	+ S	
Mastery orientation	H13b	+	0.22***	0.14	3.00	+ S	

p* <0.10; *p* <0.05; ****p* <0.01;
S - supported; R - refuted; ns - not significant.

Table 7-4 SEM Results for Eighteen Hypotheses

7.6 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher has explained the data screening process carried out prior to multivariate data analysis. The demographic characteristics of the sample were described and reliability analysis was performed for all the constructs. Reliability analysis was followed by confirmatory factor analysis and the structural model. The conclusion of the hypotheses testing is that out of eighteen hypotheses, fifteen were supported, one was found to be non-significant and two were refuted. In the following chapter, i.e., the Discussion chapter, the core findings of the research will be discussed.

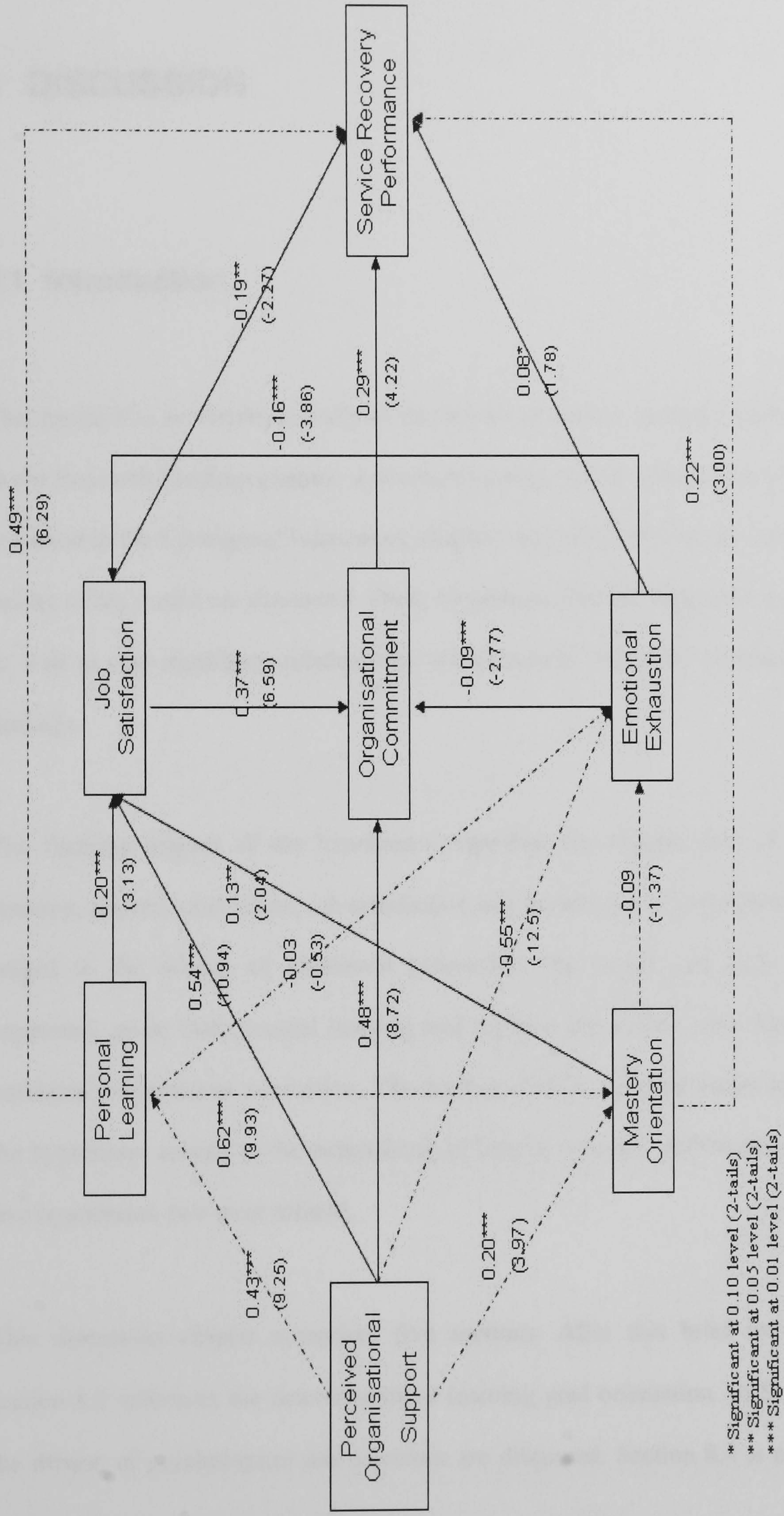


Figure 7-3: Structural Model

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Introduction

This research is an empirical study of the drivers of service recovery performance. In the Research Findings chapter, a structural model, which tested the relationships proposed in the Conceptual Framework chapter, was presented. In this chapter, the results of the model are discussed. Those hypotheses that are supported or refuted, as well as non-significant relationships are discussed. Table 8.1 summarises the findings.

The findings support all the hypotheses regarding the determinants of personal learning, mastery orientation, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. With regard to the drivers of emotional exhaustion, the results are only partially supported, given that personal learning and mastery orientation were found to be unrelated to emotional exhaustion. The findings further indicate partial support of the hypotheses related to the antecedents of service recovery performance. Of the five hypotheses, two were refuted.

This discussion chapter comprises five sections. After this brief introduction, section 8.2 addresses the determinants of learning goal orientation. In Section 8.3 the drivers of psychological job outcomes are discussed. Section 8.4 is concerned

with the antecedents of service recovery performance. Finally, in section 8.5, a summary is presented.

Determinant of Personal Learning	Hypothesis	Results	
Perceived organisational support	H1a	+	S
Determinants of Mastery Orientation			
Perceived organisational support	H1b	+	S
Personal learning	H14	+	S
Determinants of Job Satisfaction			
Personal learning	H2a	+	S
Mastery orientation	H2b	+	S
Perceived organisational support	H3	+	S
Emotional exhaustion	H4	-	S
Determinants of Organisational Commitment			
Perceived organisational support	H5	+	S
Job satisfaction	H6	+	S
Emotional exhaustion	H7	-	S
Determinants of Emotional exhaustion			
Personal learning	H8a		NS
Mastery orientation	H8b		NS
Perceived organisational support	H9	-	S
Determinants of Service Recovery Performance			
Personal learning	H13a	+	S
Mastery orientation	H13b	+	S
Job satisfaction	H10	-	R
Organisational commitment	H11	+	S
Emotional exhaustion	H12	+	R

S – Hypothesis supported; R – Hypothesis refuted; NS – non- significant relationship.

Table 8-1 Hypotheses and Results

8.2 Determinants of Learning Goal Orientation

8.2.1 POS as Determinant of Personal Learning

As previously discussed in Chapter 5, perceived organisational support is expected to have a positive impact on personal learning. The justification for this is twofold:

first, by receiving a supervisor's career support, employees gain new capabilities; second, supervisor's psychosocial support, namely through counselling and friendship, may translate into employees' development of vital thinking skills (Lankau and Scandura 2002). The relationship that has been empirically proven, to date, is that between the supervisor's career support and the relational job learning dimension of personal learning. Based on the idea that employees regard supervisor's support as a sign of organisation's support (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002), the hypothesis that POS directly affects personal learning was tested. Findings suggest that POS has an extremely strong, positive impact on personal learning (estimated parameter= 0.43; $p < 0.01$).

8.2.2 *Determinants of Mastery Orientation*

A mastery-oriented pattern comprises the search for challenge and an eagerness to maintain a commitment to difficult tasks (Dweck and Leggett 1988). Individuals with mastery orientation have an optimistic attitude towards the organisation and strongly believe that success depends on one's effort (see Ames and Archer 1988). Ultimately, service employees with a mastery orientation do their best to develop their competency, gain new skills and enhance their ability (Janssen and VanYperen 2004).

8.2.2.1 Perceived Organisational Support

As with personal learning, mastery orientation has been hypothesised to be affected positively by perceived organisational support. The underlying arguments are twofold. First, the supervisor may support frontline employees by transmitting them job-related information, know-how and experience, all of which can contribute to their self-improvement and the development of their skills (Janssen and VanYperen 2004). Second, because mastery-oriented individuals are hard working and motivated employees, their supervisor's support may be translated into the performance of tasks almost independently, i.e., without undue supervision (Janssen and VanYperen 2004). Both reasons justify the positive impact of supervisor's support on mastery orientation. In addition, anchored in the idea that employees view supervisor's support as a sign of organisation's support (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002), a positive effect of perceived organisational support on mastery orientation was hypothesised. This hypothesis was corroborated by the results of this research: perceived organisational support has a strong, indeed positive impact on mastery orientation (estimated parameter= 0.20; $p < 0.01$). Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that the relative effect of perceived organisational support is stronger on personal learning than on mastery orientation.

8.2.2.2 Personal Learning

It is argued that the learning process comprises two stages: the personal learning and the mastery orientation phases. In the first stage (i.e., personal learning), the service frontline personnel enhance their understanding of job interdependence with

others, whilst simultaneously acquiring new skills and capabilities (e.g. attentive listening, efficient communication and problems' resolution). These improve working relationships (Lankau and Scandura 2002). The personal learning step is followed by the mastery orientation stage. Here, employees advance further in terms of learning. Janssen and VanYperen (2004) argue that in the mastery orientation phase, employees feel successful in their job when they get the maximum out of themselves, master a new skill which was difficult for them in the past, or improve on specific aspects. At this stage, they not only acquire new knowledge, but also master new skills. Therefore, the hypothesis that personal learning will have a positive relationship with mastery orientation (i.e., H14) was supported by our findings (estimated parameter = 0.62; $p < 0.01$).

The antecedents of mastery orientation (i.e., perceived organisational support and personal learning) would appear to explain 52% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.52$).

8.3 Determinants of Psychological Job Outcomes

8.3.1 Determinants of Job Satisfaction

8.3.1.1 Learning Goal Orientation: Mastery Orientation and Personal Learning

In this research, a positive impact of personal learning and mastery orientation on job satisfaction was hypothesised. The following reasons justify the formulation of

H2a and H2b:

1. Frontline service employees with a learning goal orientation enjoy the process of learning how to provide an efficient service (see Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994) and therefore it is probable that this enjoyment is translated into job satisfaction.
2. Personal learning provides employees with a greater understanding about the fit between their own job and the company's overall goals (Lankau and Scandura 2002).
3. Employees who have improved their communication skills as well as their problem-solving capabilities may believe that they are more capable and efficient, which in turn may increase their job satisfaction (Lankau and Scandura 2002). In other words, employees who expand their self-knowledge may have more positive responses to their work environment due to their augmented self-confidence and skills (Lankau and Scandura 2002).

Findings reveal that the two hypotheses, H2a and H2b, were accepted. Personal learning (estimated parameter = 0.20, $p < 0.01$) and mastery orientation (estimated parameter = 0.13, $p < 0.05$) were found to have a positive effect on job satisfaction. It is worth to note that the impact of personal learning is stronger than the effect of mastery orientation on job satisfaction. This finding suggests that in this industry, the employees gain more job satisfaction from the first stage (i.e., personal learning) rather than the more advanced phase of the learning process (i.e., mastery orientation).

8.3.1.2 Perceived Organisational Support

The main argument of H3 is that employees with a high POS usually consider their job more pleasant and are happier at work (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). Based on Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) research, it was hypothesised that POS had a positive impact on job satisfaction by:

- a) Satisfying socioemotional needs, namely the needs for esteem, affiliation, emotional support, and social approval (Armeli et al. 1998);
- b) Enhancing performance-reward expectancies;
- c) Showing the availability of help when required.

The results show a strong positive impact of perceived organisational support on job satisfaction (estimated parameter = 0.54, $p < 0.01$). This finding contributes to the literature in terms of reinforcing the direction of causality from perceived organisational support to job satisfaction.

8.3.1.3 Emotional Exhaustion

Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994) studied emotional exhaustion as a dimension of the burnout construct. The authors claim that job satisfaction is a consequence of burnout, founded on two theoretical reasons:

1. Since burnout is the result of an assessment procedure through which the employee appraises the demands of the job in relation to his or her resources, it is expected that the outcome of this evaluation will have an impact on employee's job satisfaction.

2. Since both burnout and job satisfaction are emotional responses, it is hypothesised that these are related.

Therefore, anchored in previous research (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994; Lee and Ashforth 1996; Babakus et al. 1999; Boles, Johnston, and Hair 1997) Hypothesis 4 emerged. The results confirm H4 by revealing the strong negative impact of emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction (estimated parameter = -0.16, $p < 0.01$).

The determinants of job satisfaction (i.e., personal learning, mastery orientation, perceived organisational support and emotional exhaustion) explain 70% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.70$).

8.3.2 Determinants of Organisational Commitment

8.3.2.1 Perceived Organisational Support

The main underlying theoretical framework for H5 is the *norm of reciprocity* (Gouldner 1960). According to this norm, the employee is encouraged to respond favourably to an organisation's concern with his/her well-being (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli 2001). In other words, POS is expected to reinforce organisational commitment (Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro 1990). Empirical evidence from this study confirms that POS strongly reinforces organisational commitment (estimated parameter = 0.48, $p < 0.01$).

8.3.2.2 Job Satisfaction

An ample body of literature has addressed the question of causal ordering for the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Brown and Peterson 1993). In this research, job satisfaction is considered to be an antecedent of organisational commitment. Two main reasons justify this decision. First, Brown and Peterson's (1993) meta-analysis concludes that the predominant effect is from job satisfaction to organisational commitment, rather than vice versa. Second, the majority of conceptual studies and empirical findings (e.g. Brashear et al. 2003; Singh, Verbeke, and Rhoads 1996; Johnston et al. 1990; Bartol 1979) suggest that job satisfaction precedes organisational commitment.

Findings from this study support H6 by showing the strong positive impact of job satisfaction on organisational commitment (estimated parameter = 0.37, $p < 0.01$).

8.3.2.3 Emotional Exhaustion

The underlying principle of H7 is that in a situation in which employees feel emotionally exhausted because of their work, they may become less eager to accept and achieve organisational goals (Leiter and Maslach 1988). In other words, emotionally exhausted employees who look upon others in an uncaring way and are not self-fulfilled in their own job are thought to be less committed to the organisation (Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994).

The results of this study corroborate H7 by showing the significant negative effect of frontline employees' emotional exhaustion on organisational commitment (estimated parameter= -0.09, $p < 0.01$).

Overall, the antecedents of organisational commitment (i.e., perceived organisational support, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion) explain 74% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.74$).

8.3.3 Determinants of Emotional Exhaustion

An unexpected result occurred with regard to the antecedents of emotional exhaustion. Two (H8a, H8b) out of three relationships proposed were found to be non-significant. The remaining hypothesis (H9) was supported: perceived organisational support was found to have a strong negative impact on emotional exhaustion (parameter estimate= -0.55; $p < 0.01$).

8.3.3.1 Learning Goal Orientation: Mastery Orientation and Personal Learning

Despite the lack of empirical evidence with regard to the effect of personal learning and mastery orientation on emotional exhaustion, hypotheses H8a and H8b were proposed. The basis for proposing them is the idea that all the characteristics of a learning-oriented employee, namely that he/she enjoys working, is attracted to challenges and regards mistakes as part of the process of learning (Sujan, Weitz,

and Kumar 1994) naturally suggest that this individual is less subject to emotional exhaustion. In particular, it is likely that a learning-oriented individual does not feel frustrated by his job, burned out from it or like he/she is at the end of his/her tether (see Babakus et al. 1999). Hence, it was hypothesised that the higher the a) personal learning and b) mastery orientation, the lower the emotional exhaustion suffered by the frontline employee.

The results of this study show that there are negative but non-significant relationships between both personal learning and mastery orientation, and emotional exhaustion. These findings suggest that for service frontline personnel, neither the first stage of a learning process (i.e., personal learning) nor the more advanced phase, that of mastery orientation, produce an impact on their emotional exhaustion. In other words, personal learning and mastery orientation are not sufficient to reduce frontline employees' emotional exhaustion. A possible explanation for the non-significance of the relationship between personal learning and emotional exhaustion is that personal skills development, namely the improvement of listening skills and the development of new ideas on how to perform the job (Lankau and Scandura 2002), is not strong enough to alter the feelings of being emotionally drained by the work, frustrated by the job and burned out as a result of it (Maslach and Jackson 1981). With regard to the non-significant relationship between mastery orientation and emotional exhaustion, it appears that the fact that employees master a new skill which was difficult for them in the past, try to get the maximum out of themselves (Duda 2001; VanYperen and Janssen 2002; Janssen and VanYperen 2004), etc, does not produce an effect on their emotional exhaustion.

8.3.3.2 Perceived Organisational Support

Empirical evidence so far focuses on two relationships: the first is between unpleasant supervisor contact and emotional exhaustion (Leiter and Maslach 1988) while the second is between organisational support and burnout (Cropanzano et al. 1997). Therefore, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no study that looks at the impact of perceived organisational support on emotional exhaustion. The underlying rationale for this is that the more supportive the environment, the lower the stress level intensity (Cropanzano et al. 1997).

Results from this research corroborate H9 by demonstrating that perceived organisational support predicts emotional exhaustion. More specifically, perceived organisational support has a strong, negative effect on emotional exhaustion (parameter estimate= -0.55; $p < 0.01$).

8.4 Determinants of Service Recovery Performance

The five antecedents of service recovery performance explain forty seven percent of its total variation ($R^2 = 0.47$). Three out of five hypotheses regarding the determinants of service recovery performance were supported (H11, H13a and H13b). Hypotheses 10 and 12 were refuted: job satisfaction showed a negative impact on service recovery performance, whereas emotional exhaustion revealed a positive impact on service recovery performance.

8.4.1 Learning Goal Orientation: Mastery Orientation and Personal Learning

Empirical evidence suggests that a learning goal orientation enhances salespeople's performance by encouraging them to work hard and work smart (Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994). Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla (1998) argue that learning-oriented individuals tend to employ self-regulation strategies, which facilitate the development of their abilities and knowledge, and therefore results in superior performance. In a recent work, Seijts et al. (2004), show that a learning goal orientation has a significant, positive correlation with subsequent performance when a learning goal is set. Also VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum (2001) had previously reported that a learning goal orientation correlated positively with performance (i.e., exam scores). Finally, Brett and VandeWalle (1999) found that learning goal orientation had a significant, positive relationship with the skills development and skills refinement dimensions of the skills improvement content goal, which in turn was significantly and positively related to task performance.

Based on these previous results, it is proposed that learning goal orientation positively influences the way frontline service employees perceive they deal with customers in the service recovery process.

The findings reveal that both personal learning and mastery orientation are predictors of service recovery performance. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the impact of personal learning (estimated parameter= 0.49, $p < 0.01$) is stronger than the effect of mastery orientation (estimated parameter= 0.22, $p < 0.01$) on service

recovery performance. In other words, the first step in the learning process, i.e., personal learning, seems to have a greater impact on the service recovery performed by frontline employees than the more advanced phase of the learning process, namely mastery orientation.

8.4.2 Job Satisfaction

This research findings reveal a surprising result: job satisfaction has a negative impact on service recovery performance. A possible justification for this is that individuals who are satisfied with their job immediately assume that if a customer complains, the fault is not that of the company, but the customer. In other words, frontline service personnel are so satisfied with their job that they become unaware of any failure that may be the company's responsibility. As a consequence, these employees not only lack effort when dealing with complaining customers but also react negatively towards complaining customers, thereby providing a poor service recovery.

Another possible reason that justifies the negative impact of job satisfaction on service recovery performance is that service recovery performance better captures the *ability* component of frontline employees ("Considering all the things I do, I handle dissatisfied customers quite well."; "I do not let any customer I deal with leave with problems unresolved."), as opposed to the *motivation* component ("I don't mind dealing with complaining customers."; "Satisfying complaining customers is a great thrill to me."). Therefore, despite being satisfied in their job, frontline employees may not be able to perform the service recovery because they

are not sufficiently empowered to make decisions about solving customer complaints (see Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998; Bowen and Lawler 1995). Consequently, their service recovery performance is low.

8.4.3 Organisational Commitment

The focus of this research is on affective organisational commitment, which reflects “the strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Porter et al. 1974, p. 604). In line with most previous research (e.g. Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000) a positive impact of affective organisational commitment on performance, in particular service recovery performance, is expected. The underlying principle for hypothesising this positive relationship is that employees who are affectively committed to their organisation have a tendency to perform better (Meyer et al. 1989). Unlike Mathieu and Zajac’s (1990) meta-analysis conclusion that, in most instances, organisational commitment has mainly a small direct impact on performance, the results of this research show that the positive direct impact is, in fact, considerable (parameter estimate= 0.29; $p < 0.01$).

8.4.4 Emotional Exhaustion

On the basis of Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994)’s research, a negative effect of frontline employees’ emotional exhaustion on their behavioural performance was hypothesised. According to the authors, three reasons justify this negative impact:

- 1) the frontline employee's energy is reduced and therefore his/her effort at work diminishes;
- 2) the frontline employee enters into a vicious circle, in which he/she is unlikely to ask for and gain support. Consequently, his/her performance continues to be poor;
- 3) the frontline employee feels he/she has little, or indeed no control at all over the job, and therefore when job problems arise, such as complaints from customers, he/she is not confident enough to solve these issues.

In contrast to previous literature (e.g. Babakus et al. 1999; Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994) that reported either a negative or a non-significant relationship between emotional exhaustion and performance, this study's findings reveal a positive impact of frontline service personnel's emotional exhaustion on their actual service recovery performance. A possible explanation is that they identify customers' complaints with their own emotional exhaustion (i.e., feeling emotionally drained, burned out and frustrated) in relation to the job. Due to the similarity of feelings towards the company, frontline personnel understand the customer situation, and assume that if there is a complaint, it is the company's fault. Therefore, frontline employees have a positive attitude towards complaining customers, thereby providing a good service recovery performance.

Another possible explanation is that providing a superior service recovery to a complaining customer is regarded by an emotionally exhausted frontline employee as a means of bringing about "personal recovery". More specifically, by addressing customer complaints, the frontline service employee might become more optimistic since his/her job produces immediate benefits (i.e., a satisfied customer).

Simultaneously, while addressing customers' problems, the frontline employee may "forget" about his/her personal emotional exhaustion. This result provides a promising avenue for further research.

8.5 Summary

In this chapter, the research findings have been further analysed. Based on the survey data, the model proposed in the conceptual framework chapter (Chapter 5) was discussed.

The results reveal partial support of the hypothesised relationships. They corroborate the fact that personal learning is driven by perceived organisational support. Both personal learning and perceived organisational support are antecedents of mastery orientation. In addition, the findings support the hypotheses related to the determinants of job satisfaction (i.e., personal learning, mastery orientation, perceived organisational support and emotional exhaustion) as well as the drivers of organisational commitment (that is, perceived organisational support, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion).

Partial support was found for the antecedents of emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion was shown to be influenced by perceived organisational support, but not by personal learning and mastery orientation. Finally, the most unexpected results emerged for the direct drivers of service recovery performance. Job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion were found to affect service recovery performance, but in a way that is opposite to that hypothesised previously: job satisfaction negatively

affects, and emotional exhaustion positively influences service recovery performance. The remaining hypotheses regarding the other determinants of service recovery performance, namely organisational commitment, personal learning and mastery orientation, were supported.

Following the discussion of the results, the next chapter presents the research's key theoretical and managerial implications, the limitations of the research and directions for future research.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the researcher will begin by providing an overview of the thesis. Secondly, the research findings are summarised. Thirdly, the contribution of this study to the extant literature is addressed. This is followed, fourthly, by the managerial implications of the research. Fifthly, the research limitations are pointed out and finally, directions for further research are suggested.

9.2 Overview of the Thesis

This research examines the antecedents of service recovery performance. In particular, the roles of perceived organisational support, learning goal orientation and psychological outcomes are considered. Learning goal orientation comprises personal learning and mastery orientation whereas psychological outcomes encompass job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion.

The thesis comprises nine chapters. In the introduction chapter, the research problem and research objectives are presented. In addition, expected theoretical and managerial contributions are offered. Chapter 1 is followed by a comprehensive literature review (Chapter 2 to Chapter 4) in which research gaps are identified. More specifically, Chapter 2 reviews goal orientation theory and the individual

learning literature. Chapter 3 reviews the theory on psychological job outcomes and perceived organisational support. Chapter 4 describes the scant theory on service recovery performance. Following the literature review, Chapter 5 proposes a conceptual framework, which comprises thirteen research hypotheses. Chapter 6 describes the methods employed to collect the data required to address the research questions. Moreover, the data analysis procedure is explained. Chapter 7 presents the research findings regarding the final eighteen hypotheses. Chapter 8 analyses and discusses the core findings of the study within the context of the current and previous research. Finally, this chapter provides an overview of the thesis, presents the research's key theoretical and managerial implications, and addresses the limitations of the thesis. Additionally, the Conclusion chapter suggests valuable directions for future research.

9.3 Summary of Research Findings

This research contributes to the service marketing literature not only by re-testing relationships addressed in past research, but also by testing new theoretical relationships. Next, the researcher provides a summary of the research findings by dividing this section into two parts: the first covers the research findings related to previously established relationships and the second addresses new empirical findings.

9.3.1 Established Research Hypotheses

9.3.1.1 Determinants of Job Satisfaction

In relation to the determinants of job satisfaction, all the hypothesised relationships were supported. Personal learning (estimated parameter = 0.20, $p < 0.01$) and mastery orientation (estimated parameter = 0.13, $p < 0.05$) were found to affect job satisfaction in a positive way. Additionally, the strong positive impact of perceived organisational support on job satisfaction (estimated parameter = 0.54, $p < 0.01$) corroborated past research results. Finally, in line with previous research, a strong negative impact of emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction (estimated parameter = -0.16, $p < 0.01$) was reported.

The determinants of job satisfaction (i.e., personal learning, mastery orientation, perceived organisational support and emotional exhaustion) explained 70% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.70$).

9.3.1.2 Determinants of Organisational Commitment

As with the antecedents of job satisfaction, the hypotheses regarding the determinants of organisational commitment were all supported. Empirical evidence from this study corroborates previous findings that reveal that perceived organisational support strongly reinforces organisational commitment (estimated parameter = 0.48, $p < 0.01$). This research also confirms the strong, positive impact

of job satisfaction on organisational commitment (estimated parameter = 0.37, $p < 0.01$). Finally, the results of this study corroborate the negative effect of frontline employees' emotional exhaustion on their organisational commitment (estimated parameter = -0.09, $p < 0.01$).

Overall, the antecedents of organisational commitment (i.e., perceived organisational support, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion) explain 74% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.74$).

9.3.1.3 Determinants of Service Recovery Performance

One out of the three hypotheses regarding the determinants of service recovery performance, which were tested in the past, was supported. The other two hypotheses, which were refuted, will be discussed in the next section of new empirical findings. The findings reveal that in line with previous literature, organisational commitment has a positive and direct impact on service recovery performance (parameter estimate = 0.29; $p < 0.01$).

9.3.2 *New Empirical Findings*

9.3.2.1 Determinant of Personal Learning

The new hypothesis that perceived organisational support will have a positive relationship with personal learning was tested. The findings from this research

reveal that perceived organisational support has an extremely strong, positive impact on personal learning (estimated parameter = 0.43; $p < 0.01$). Indeed, perceived organisational support explains 19% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.19$) in personal learning.

9.3.2.2 Determinants of Mastery Orientation

The two proposed relationships regarding the antecedents of mastery orientation were empirically tested for the first time. A positive effect of both perceived organisational support and personal learning on mastery orientation (estimated parameter = 0.20; $p < 0.01$, estimated parameter = 0.62; $p < 0.01$, respectively) were found. The antecedents of mastery orientation, namely perceived organisational support and personal learning, explain 52% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.52$).

9.3.2.3 Determinants of Emotional Exhaustion

Regarding the antecedents of emotional exhaustion, three new relationships were proposed and empirically tested. Surprisingly, two relationships were found non-significant. Nevertheless, perceived organisational support was found to have a strong negative impact on emotional exhaustion (parameter estimate = -0.55; $p < 0.01$). The determinants of emotional exhaustion explain 37% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.37$).

9.3.2.4 Determinants of Service Recovery Performance

In terms of the antecedents of service recovery performance, four new results have emerged: two hypotheses were empirically tested for the first time and another two hypotheses, which have been tested in previous studies, were refuted.

The findings reveal that both personal learning and mastery orientation are positive predictors of service recovery performance. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the impact of personal learning (estimated parameter = 0.49, $p < 0.01$) is stronger than the effect of mastery orientation (estimated parameter = 0.22, $p < 0.01$) on service recovery performance. As previously stated, two hypotheses were refuted: job satisfaction showed a negative impact on service recovery performance, whereas emotional exhaustion revealed a positive impact on service recovery performance.

In sum, eight new theoretical associations were tested empirically, contributing in this way to the literature on the relationships between perceived organisational support, learning goal orientation, emotional exhaustion and service recovery performance. Moreover, two relationships which were empirically tested in past research were refuted. A future research agenda will seek to further examine these new empirical findings.

9.4 Theoretical Implications

The thesis addresses a number of research gaps. First, there is a lack of empirical research on service recovery performance from the frontline employees' perspective (exception: Karatepe 2006; Babakus et al. 2003; Boshoff and Allen 2000).

Second, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the service recovery phenomenon has not been studied in the British context.

The third research gap is related to the incorporation of the goal orientation theory rooted in the fields of educational psychology and child development, more specifically the learning goal orientation concept, in the Marketing literature. To date, only three studies, namely Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994), Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla (1998) and Harris, Mowen, and Brown (2005) have analysed learning goal orientation within the Marketing domain. Therefore, the key contribution of this study for the Marketing field is the revitalisation of the learning goals' component of the goal orientation theory.

As a consequence of incorporating the learning goal orientation into the marketing literature, seven new theoretical relationships were put forward and subsequently empirically tested. In particular, the relationships from 1) perceived organisational support to personal learning, 2) perceived organisational support to mastery orientation, 3) personal learning to mastery orientation, 4) personal learning to emotional exhaustion, 5) personal learning to service recovery performance, 6) mastery orientation to emotional exhaustion, and 7) mastery orientation to service

recovery performance. Next, these seven new relationships, as well as an additional link from perceived organisational support to emotional exhaustion, are explained in more detail.

Link from perceived organisational support to both personal learning and mastery orientation

Research investigating the antecedents of learning goal orientation is very scarce. Only a few studies, namely those of Harris, Mowen, and Brown (2005), Wang and Netemeyer (2002), Lankau and Scandura (2002) and Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994) have investigated the drivers of learning goal orientation. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, perceived organisational support, as an antecedent of personal learning and mastery orientation, has not been investigated.

The theoretical contribution associated with testing this relationship is twofold. Firstly, an important contribution is made to the literature as regards the antecedents of learning goal orientation. Secondly, the researcher opens a new avenue for further research, which focuses on the relationship between perceived organisational support and learning goal orientation.

Link from both personal learning and mastery orientation to emotional exhaustion

Two drivers of emotional exhaustion that have not been analysed by previous studies are personal learning and mastery orientation. It is proposed here that due to

the intrinsic characteristics of a learning employee, personal learning and mastery orientation would impact negatively on emotional exhaustion.

Link from both personal learning and mastery orientation to service recovery performance

Two other new relationships to be proposed theoretically and afterwards empirically tested, are those from personal learning and mastery orientation to service recovery performance. Thus far, research has concentrated on the association between learning goal orientation and performance, but not specifically service recovery performance.

Finally, the distinction between personal learning and mastery orientation within the learning goal orientation domain has never been addressed in past research.

9.5 Managerial Implications

Service recovery is crucial, and indeed, was found to be considerably more important than the initial service failure, which preceded the service recovery act (Spreng, Harrell, and Mackoy 1995). The results of this research provide service managers with practical guidelines for managing service recovery and developing service recovery procedures. Understanding the nature and determinants of the service recovery phenomenon is a critical foundation for the development and implementation of effective service recovery programmes.

Companies must use service failures in order to detect problems in the service delivery system (Spreng, Harrell, and Mackoy 1995). In this way, firms may use the service failure in their favour in order to improve the service delivery system and consequently achieve greater levels of satisfaction from the customers' viewpoint (Tax and Brown 1998).

The authors argue that effective service recovery is highly influenced by the efficiency of frontline employees to whom the customer complains. In their study, 65% of the complaints were first made to frontline staff. Therefore, service recovery performance must be taken into account in human resource management practices (Tax and Brown 1998). Next, the implications of this study's empirical findings for managers are discussed.

The first issue that managers need to be aware of is that hiring and training processes must take into account the role of frontline employees in service recovery (Tax and Brown 1998). Thus, it is crucial to consider complaint handling as a vital component of frontline employees' job specifications (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998).

Secondly, the results of this research suggest that frontline service personnel's recovery performance may be enhanced through personal learning and mastery orientation. Therefore, in the recruitment process, the selection and appointment of employees for frontline roles should take into consideration their intrinsic learning goal orientation. A learning goal orientation should particularly be valuable given that the job of a frontline employee involves developing customer service

competencies (VandeWalle et al. 1999). In sum, managers are supposed to have a preference for frontline employees with a strong learning goal orientation, since this will impact positively on the service recovery provided to customers.

Thirdly, it is important that the firm provides support to employees. If employees perceive that the company really cares about their well-being, as well as their general satisfaction at work, and is simultaneously proud of their accomplishments (Eisenberger et al. 1986), frontline service personnel are likely to be more committed to the organisation and as a result provide a superior service recovery performance.

Fourthly, an interesting finding is related to the role of job satisfaction as a negative predictor of service recovery performance. This result suggests that frontline employees are so satisfied in their job that if a situation occurs in which there is a customer complaint, they automatically assume it is the fault of the customer. This issue is managerially troubling, since to date, many practitioners believed that employees who are satisfied in their job will perform better (Boshoff and Allen 2000). In other words, satisfied employees were expected to provide a better service when handling customer complaints. On the basis of the results of this study, it is recommended to managers that in their training sessions they transmit to employees, who are highly satisfied in their job, the importance of assuming responsibility for failures and dealing with problems (Tax and Brown 1998) as well as approaching the problem from the customer's perspective rather than the firm's perspective. Employees should be able to incarnate the customer, who is waiting when the food is delayed, and as a result, keep the customer informed, relaxed and

valued (Bejou and Palmer 1998). In this way, an adequate service recovery performance may be provided. This implies that service managers should draw on internal marketing to promote next to frontline employees the company's vision in terms of service excellence (Boshoff and Allen 2000).

In sum, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of service recovery performance, so as to help managers develop successful service recovery programmes. In terms of the employee hiring process³³, this may indeed be advantageous in screening applicants, in view of their traits, specifically personal learning and mastery orientation. The emphasis of the service recovery programme should also be on promoting the organisational commitment of frontline employees, by providing them with support. These three factors, i.e., personal learning, mastery orientation and organisational commitment, significantly increase service recovery effectiveness. Simultaneously, managers are urged to transmit to their service frontline personnel, through appropriate training programmes, the importance of acknowledging failures (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999).

Thus, the results of this study offer service managers practical guidelines, which may be applied “to implement service delivery systems that include provisions for appropriate recovery efforts, allocate recovery resources to maximize returns in terms of satisfaction, and train employees to recognize failures and reduce their effects on customers” (Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999: 370). The ultimate goal is to develop successful recovery programmes, which will contribute to superior service quality and strengthened customer relationships (i.e., enhanced customer

³³ Or even the reassignment of existing staff to jobs in which they would be more productive.

satisfaction and loyalty), which in turn increases customer value and ultimately profitability (Tax and Brown 1998; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998).

9.6 Research Limitations

Notwithstanding the key findings as well as the theoretical and managerial implications which emerge from this study, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the research.

The first limitation of this study is the possibility of the existence of common method variance, since all the data collected were based on responses from a single source: that is, frontline service employees. The use of self-reported measures may have amplified the strength of some of the correlations (Teas 1983) and eventually produced “biased estimates of model parameters” (Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005, p. 304; see Doty and Glick 1998). In other words, subjective measures were used to assess perceived organisational support, personal learning, mastery orientation, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, emotional exhaustion and service recovery performance. The use of self-reported evaluation is particularly worrying for the service recovery performance variable. An alternative would have been to use either managers’ or customers’ evaluations of frontline employees’ service recovery (see Boshoff and Allen 2000). Managers’ perceptions of frontline service personnel’s recovery performance would be preferable to customer evaluations. The reason is that most research thus far has analysed service recovery performance from the customers’ perspective. Therefore, despite being recognised as a limitation of the research, the exclusion of customers’ perceptions

of service recovery was decided before carrying out this study. Nevertheless, the inclusion of managers' perceptions of frontline employees' recovery performance is an imperative direction for a future research agenda.

The second limitation is associated with the likely influence of recall bias on results, since this study is based on retrospective evaluation (Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar 1998).

The third limitation is the cross-sectional design of the study, i.e., the data were collected at one specific point in time. Therefore, all the variables were assessed simultaneously (see Reichers 1986). This implies that no causal inference can be established unequivocally in relation to the relationships between variables, nor can the possibility of reverse causality be excluded (Masterson et al. 2000; Teas 1983). Thus, the results should be interpreted cautiously, since they only provide information regarding the support or refutation of previously established causal relationships (Teas 1983).

Fourthly, the research was conducted in a single organisation, which may restrict the generalisability of the results to identical organisations. However, the advantage of focusing on a single company, is that we have a homogeneous sample which is beneficial in terms of reducing extraneous variance usually attributable to the heterogeneity among companies within the same industry (see Hess, Ganesan, and Klein 2003; Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999).

In other words, it may be argued that a single company research design allows controlling for contextual effects, such as corporate culture and service delivery

situation (see Piercy et al. 2006). Overall, a single firm design minimises the probable impact of organisational and environmental factors on the research findings (Babakus et al. 1999).

Fifthly, like many other studies in the field (e.g. Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994), the research findings rely on a particular sample of boundary-spanners, namely frontline service employees. Further research with other samples (e.g. salespeople) is advisable.

Sixthly, the focus of this study is on service failures while carrying out duties specific to frontline employees' job specifications, in particular taking an order, serving a meal, providing the bill and cleaning up after the meal is finished (Berry 1980; Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005). It cannot be argued that consumer's assessment of the company's overall performance depends exclusively on an exceptional service recovery performance when service failures occur (Ashill, Carruthers, and Krisjanous 2005).

Seventhly, the non-significant paths between personal learning and emotional exhaustion, as well as mastery orientation and emotional exhaustion, might be context dependent. Research in the future may address this limitation by testing both relationships in other service contexts.

Finally, the researcher used a shortened measure (8-item) of perceived organisational support (POS), which may have had an effect on the results of this research (Masterson et al. 2000). Nevertheless, since there is empirical evidence of

the unidimensionality of the original scale as well as its high internal reliability, the use of shorter forms is not expected to be problematical (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). According to the authors, the only concern surrounds the incorporation of the two facets of POS's definition, namely organisation's valuation of employees' contribution and its care for their welfare, in the shorter versions of the scale. In this study, both facets of the definition of POS were incorporated.

In sum, due to the abovementioned research limitations, generalising the conclusions of this study to other service contexts must be undertaken with caution.

9.7 Future Research Directions

After discussing the theoretical and managerial implications, as well as the research limitations, it is useful here to suggest avenues for further research.

Some of the directions for future research aim to address the research limitations, in particular. Firstly, objective measures were not included in this study. Therefore, future research may avoid relying exclusively on self-reports by incorporating measures drawn from a company's data (e.g. performance).

A further alternative for overcoming the common method variance issue is to assess employees' service recovery performance from their managers' or customers' perspective (see Boshoff and Allen 2000). As previously discussed, it would be preferable to include managers' evaluations, rather than customers' perceptions of the service recovery of frontline staff. Therefore, a future research agenda should

also examine manager perspectives. Building on this idea, an interesting avenue for future research would be to compare both managers and frontline employees' perspectives on the service recovery carried out by the latter.

Additionally, it may be valuable to assess other variables, namely employee's personal learning and mastery orientation, as based on sources (e.g. co-workers, managers) other than the frontline employee being analysed.

Thirdly, as in most studies in marketing, this research is limited by its cross-sectional design. Future studies are urged to research the antecedents of service recovery performance using a longitudinal research design. This would allow a more accurate assessment of the direction of causality in the hypothesised relationships (see Masterson et al. 2000), which cannot be inferred in cross-sectional designs.

Fourthly, the study focuses on a single industry, namely the catering industry. Additionally, the research was conducted in a single company. Further research in other service industries (e.g. airline, automobile repair, bank, hotel, etc) is desirable. Also, the use of multicompany research designs in future research on service recovery performance is recommended. Finally, researchers are advised to test the conceptual framework with different samples of boundary-spanners, such as salespeople. The former procedures will permit the cross-validation of the findings of this study and their generalisability.

Fifthly, some of the variables were measured using modified versions of scales initially developed in non-service contexts (e.g. job satisfaction). The results of this

research have revealed high internal consistency reliability, as well as evidence for convergent and discriminant validity (see Research Findings chapter).

Nevertheless, future research is encouraged to confirm the applicability of these scales to service settings.

9.8 Summary

This concluding chapter has sought to highlight some key aspects of the thesis.

In section 9.2, the researcher provided an overview of the thesis by explaining that the research examines the drivers of service recovery performance. Accordingly, perceived organisational support, learning goal orientation and psychological job outcomes are proposed as antecedents. The fact that learning goal orientation comprises both personal learning and mastery orientation, and psychological job outcomes encompass job satisfaction, organisational commitment and emotional exhaustion, was mentioned.

Section 9.3 presented a summary of the research findings by dividing them into two groups: the first group comprises the research results related to previously established relationships, while the second group consists of new empirical findings. The most important findings are: 1) two of the relationships which were empirically tested in past research are refuted; 2) of the eight new theoretical relationships which were empirically tested, six are supported and two are non-significant links.

In Section 9.4, the contribution of this study to the extant marketing literature was addressed. In particular, this research provides a contribution to the service marketing field by investigating service recovery performance from a different perspective (i.e., frontline employees) and in a new context, the UK. Moreover, a contribution is made by incorporating the goal orientation theory, more specifically its learning component, in the marketing field. Finally, eight new theoretical relationships were proposed and empirically tested.

The theoretical contributions are followed by the managerial implications of the research. In Section 9.5, several recommendations to service managers are provided. First, it is suggested that hiring and training processes must take into account the role of frontline employees in service recovery (Tax and Brown 1998). Second, in the recruitment process, the intrinsic learning goal orientation of frontline employees must be taken into consideration. Third, it is essential that the firm provides support to frontline employees. Fourth, in the training sessions, it is crucial to transmit to employees, who are highly satisfied in their job, the importance of assuming responsibility for failures and dealing with problems (Tax and Brown 1998).

In Section 9.6, the research limitations were indicated. Some of the study's limitations were related to issues such as common method variance, recall bias, cross-sectional design, single company study, etc.

Finally, in Section 9.7, valuable directions for further research were provided. Some of these suggestions address the current research limitations.

Appendix 1 – Main Study Questionnaire

DELIVERY OF CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY TO FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES AT "FIRM X"

RESEARCH DEVELOPED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK, COVENTRY

OBJECTIVE OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire aims to collect data on the communication by **department managers** of "firm X"'s customer service strategies to **frontline employees**.

The key objective is to identify how managers at "firm X" may be more successful in delivering the customer service strategies to frontline employees. The aim is to improve the service that "firm X"'s customers receive, which in turn leads to business success.

CONFIDENTIALITY

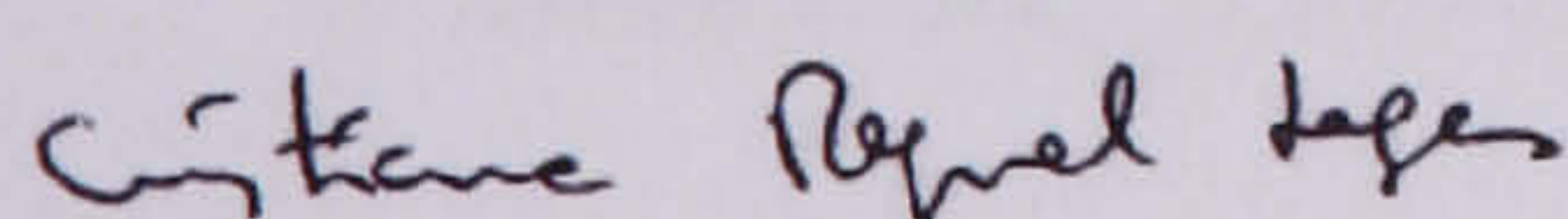
The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.

- Your identity will not be divulged to a third party.
- Your responses will only be seen by an independent researcher. At no stage, will anyone at "firm X" have access to an individual questionnaire.
- Individual responses will not be identifiable since the data will be released in aggregated form (e.g., at the site level, at regional level).

Therefore, please be the most honest you can in your responses!

Please note that "firm X"'s **Management Team** is fully co-operating with Warwick University in this work.

Thank you for your co-operation,



Cristiana Raquel Lages
BA in Economics, MSc in Business Economics
Researcher at Warwick University

YOUR CO-OPERATION IS ESSENTIAL

The success of this investigation depends entirely on the data contributed by "firm X" employees such as you.

WE NEED YOU

This research aims to include ALL employees who work within "firm X"'s catering departments without exception.

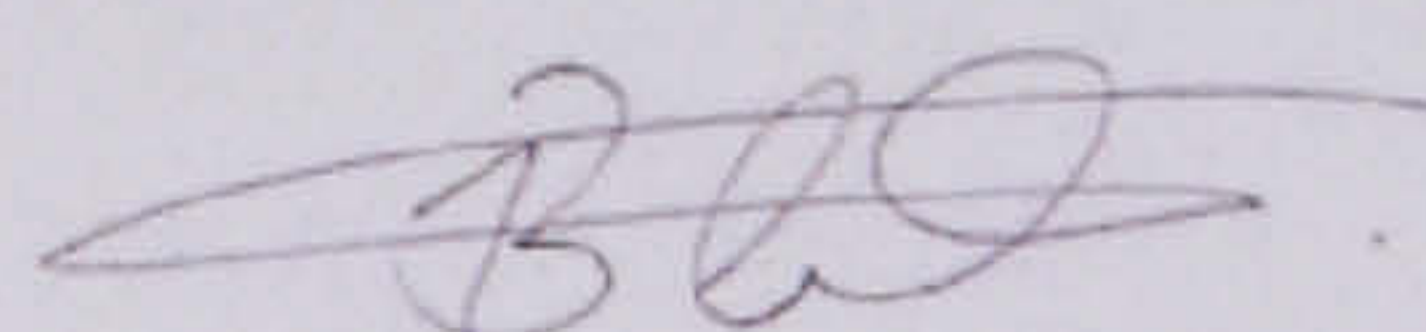
Similar questionnaires are now being completed by employees of all the other sites.

ADVANTAGES FOR "Firm X"

In return for your participation, "firm X" will have access to a **report with the conclusions of this study** which will include suggestions and recommendations on how managers at "firm X" may be more successful in communicating their customer service strategies to frontline employees.

ADVANTAGES FOR YOU

You will have the opportunity to express **your real views** on several issues related to your work. You will be given time within your working day to fill it in.



Brian Larkin
Operations Director

HOW TO FILL IN THE SURVEY

1. Please answer each question by circling (O) the options that best represent your opinion.
2. There are no right or wrong answers. **Please express your honest views and say what you really think.**
3. If you do not have an opinion, or you think you do not have enough information to answer a question, please leave it blank.
4. Some questions are about you, others about your unit/department as a whole and the others about “firm X”.
5. This questionnaire is structured so that its completion will be as easy and quick as possible. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.
6. Please put your completed survey in the free post envelope provided. Please make sure you seal it.

Give the sealed envelope to your department manager **by the 24th of June**. We guarantee that your department manager will not at any stage see your completed questionnaire.

If you have misplaced your free post envelope,
please send the survey to the following address:

Cristiana Raquel Lages
MSM Department
Warwick Business School
Warwick University
Coventry CV4 7AL

If you require assistance in completing the questionnaire, please contact:

Cristiana Raquel Lages, Tel: 024 7652 2546, Fax: 012 0352 4650, E-mail: C.R.C.Lages@warwick.ac.uk

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Employee Survey

Please make sure you have read the double-sided cover letter attached before filling in the survey.

SECTION I: YOUR VIEWS as an Employee

This first section presents a series of statements that represent possible views people might have about their *job*. Group **A** focus on *opinions* about your job, Group **B** refers to *feelings* towards your job, Group **C** asks about your *work experience*, Group **D** discusses your *job satisfaction*, **E** talks about your work *relationships* (with other employees and with “firm X”) and Group **F** compares your values to “firm X”’s values.

Listed below are statements about *your job* within **your unit**. Please indicate your response by circling the appropriate number on the following scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

1- Strongly Disagree	2- Disagree	3- Neither Disagree nor Agree	4- Agree	5- Strongly Agree
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A. Opinions about your Job

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
I have clear, planned goals and objectives for my job.						
I receive an assignment without the manpower to complete it.						
I know what my responsibilities are.						
I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.						
I know exactly what is expected of me.						
I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.						
I know how my performance is going to be evaluated.						
I receive an assignment without adequate resources and materials to execute it.						
I have to go against a rule or policy in order to carry out some assignments.						

B. Feelings towards your Job

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
I feel emotionally drained by my work.						
I do not feel used up at the end of the workday.						
I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.						
I feel burned out from my job.						
I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.						
I feel frustrated by my job.						
In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.						
I feel like I am at the end of my tether.						
I feel that I am overqualified for the job I am doing.						
I feel confident that my skills and abilities equal or exceed those of my colleagues.						

Employee Survey

B. Feelings towards your Job (cont.)

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
I could have handled a more challenging job than the one I am doing.						
Professionally speaking, my job exactly satisfies my expectations of myself.						

I feel *successful* on **my job** when...

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
... I acquire new knowledge or learn a new skill by trying hard.						
... I acquire new knowledge or master a new skill which was difficult for me in the past.						
... I learn something that motivates me to continue.						
... I feel I am improving.						
... I learn something that makes me want to practice more.						
... I learn something new that is fun to do.						
... I get the maximum out of myself.						
... I improve on particular aspects.						
... I master new knowledge or a new skill.						

Listed below are statements about *your work experience* within **your unit**. Please indicate your response by circling the appropriate number on the following scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

C. Work Experience

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
I have learned about how another department functions.						
I have increased my knowledge about “firm X” as a whole.						
I have learned about other people’s perceptions about me or my job.						
I have increased my understanding of issues and problems outside my job.						
I better understand how my job or department affects others.						
I have a better understanding of organisational politics.						
I have learned how to communicate effectively with other people.						
I have improved my listening skills.						
I have developed new ideas about how to perform my job.						
I have become more sensitive to other people’s feelings and attitudes.						
I have gained new skills.						
I have expanded the way I think about things.						

Employee Survey

Listed below are statements about your *job satisfaction* within **your unit**. Please indicate your response by circling the appropriate number on the following scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

D. Job Satisfaction	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
▪ Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.	1	2	3	4	5
▪ I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.	1	2	3	4	5
▪ Each day at work seems like it will never end.	1	2	3	4	5
▪ I find real enjoyment in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
▪ I consider my job rather unpleasant.	1	2	3	4	5

Listed below are statements about *your relationship with other employees* within **your unit**. Please indicate the degree of your **agreement or disagreement** with each of the statements by circling the appropriate number on the following scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree).

1- Strongly Disagree	2- Moderately Disagree	3- Slightly Disagree	4- Neither Disagree nor Agree	5- Slightly Agree	6- Moderately Agree	7- Strongly Agree
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E. Relationship with Other Employees	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree
▪ I give my time willingly to help other employees who have work-related problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I am willing to take time out of my own busy schedule to help with recruiting or training new employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I communicate with others before initiating actions that might affect them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I take steps to prevent problems with other employees and/or other personnel in the unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I encourage other employees when they are down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I spend a lot of time complaining about trivial matters.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I am a pacifying influence in the unit when differences of opinion occur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I always find fault with what the unit is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I attend training/information sessions that employees are encouraged but not required to attend.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I attend and actively participate in unit's meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ I always focus on what is wrong with my situation rather than the positive side of it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Employee Survey

E. Relationship with Other Employees (cont.)	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree	
▪ I attend functions that are not required (e.g., graduate fairs) but that help the image of the unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I tend to make "mountains out of molehills" (make problems bigger than they are).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I act as a "peacemaker" when others in the unit have disagreements.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ Experienced employees see advising or training new employees as one of their main job responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I am gaining a clear understanding of my role in this unit by observing my senior colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I have received little guidance from experienced employees as to how I should perform my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I have little or no access to people who have previously performed my role.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I have generally been left alone to discover what my role should be.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I have been made to feel that my skills and abilities are very important.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ Almost all of my colleagues have been supportive of me personally.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I have had to change my attitudes and values to be accepted in this unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ My colleagues have gone out of their way to help me to adjust to this unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I feel that experienced employees have held me at a distance until I conform to their expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Listed below are statements that represent possible opinions that YOU may have about working at “firm X”. Please indicate the degree of your *agreement or disagreement* with each statement by circling the response that best represents your point of view about “firm X”.

E. Relationship with “Firm X”	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree	
▪ I talk up “firm X” to my friends as a great organisation to work for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I find that my values and “firm X”’s values are very similar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I am proud to tell others that I am a part of “firm X”.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ “Firm X” inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I am extremely glad I chose “firm X” to work for over other companies I was considering at the time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ For me, “firm X” is the best of all possible organisations to work for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Employee Survey

E. Relationship with “Firm X” (cont.)	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree
▪ “Firm X” values my contribution to its well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ “Firm X” fails to appreciate any extra effort from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ “Firm X” would ignore any complaint from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ “Firm X” really cares about my well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ Even if I did the best job possible, “firm X” would fail to notice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ “Firm X” cares about my general satisfaction at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ “Firm X” shows very little concern for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
▪ “Firm X” takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Listed below are statements that reflect specific ideas about *how a company should operate*.

Thinking about **how similar your values are to those generally held at “firm X”**, please indicate the extent to which each statement is true or false. Please circle the appropriate number on a scale from 1 to 7, in which 1 = Definitely True and 7 = Definitely False.

F. “Firm X” has the same values as I do with regard to.....	Definitely True		Neither True nor False				Definitely False
... Professionalism : behaving in a business-like manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... Aggressiveness : being considered a bold, enterprising company, actively hustling in the marketplace.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... Ethics : a company’s concern for the honesty and integrity of all employees in conducting company activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... Creativity : being imaginative and innovative in the development and delivery of services.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... Industry leadership : being considered by everyone in the industry to be the number one company.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... Superior quality and service : providing high-quality services to customers as quickly and friendly as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... Employee morale and satisfaction : a positive feeling for the company and job, a sense of belonging.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Congratulations on completing over half of the survey!
We appreciate the time and thoughtfulness you are giving to the questions.
Just a couple more pages and you’ll be done.

Employee Survey

SECTION II: YOUR BEHAVIOUR as an Employee

Listed below are statements that ask about *your own behaviour* within **your unit**.

Please indicate **how characteristic** each statement is of you by circling the appropriate number on the following scale (1 = Not at All Characteristic of Me to 7 = Extremely Characteristic of Me).

A. Work Style	Not at all Characteristic of Me			Somewhat Characteristic of Me			Extremely Characteristic of Me	
▪ I tell outsiders this is a great place to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I generate favorable goodwill for this unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I say good things about this unit to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I follow up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ Regardless of circumstances, I am exceptionally courteous and respectful to customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I follow through in a conscientious manner on promises to customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I make constructive suggestions for service improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I share creative solutions to customer problems with other unit members.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I encourage co-workers to contribute ideas and suggestions for service improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Listed below are statements about the *way you deal with complaining customers*. Please indicate your response by circling the appropriate number on the following scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 7= Strongly Agree).

B. Dealing with Customers	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree	
▪ Considering all the things I do, I handle dissatisfied customers quite well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I don't mind dealing with complaining customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I do not let any customer I deal with leave with problems unresolved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ Satisfying complaining customers is a great thrill to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ Complaining customers I have dealt with in the past are among today's most loyal customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

C. How would you rate your chances of leaving this job...	Very Low		Average				Very High	
... in the next 3 months?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
... in the next 6 months?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
... in the next year?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
... in the next 2 years?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Employee Survey

Please NOTE that **D1** is about your **views** (i.e., what it is/what happens/what you do) on the customer service you provide while **D2** is about your **expectations** (i.e., what it *should* be/what *should* happen/what you *should* do) on the customer service you provide within your unit.

Please indicate **the extent to which you agree or disagree** with the following statements by circling the appropriate number on a scale from 1 to 7, in which 1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree.

D1. VIEWS on Customer Service

	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree	
▪ I enjoy nurturing my customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I take pleasure in making every customer feel like he/she is the only customer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I see every customer's problem as being important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I thrive on giving individual attention to each customer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I naturally read the customer to identify his/her needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I generally know what customers want before they ask.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I enjoy anticipating the needs of customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I am able to read the customer's body language to determine how much interaction to give.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I enjoy delivering the intended services on time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I find a great deal of satisfaction in completing tasks precisely for customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I enjoy having the confidence to provide good service.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I enjoy remembering my customers' names.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I enjoy getting to know my customers personally.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

D2. EXPECTATIONS on Customer Service

	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree	
▪ I <i>should</i> enjoy nurturing my customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> take pleasure in making every customer feel like he/she is the only customer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> see every customer's problem as being important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> thrive on giving individual attention to each customer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> naturally read the customer to identify his/her needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> generally know what customers want before they ask.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> enjoy anticipating the needs of customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> be able to read the customer's body language to determine how much interaction to give.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> enjoy delivering the intended services on time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
▪ I <i>should</i> find a great deal of satisfaction in completing tasks precisely for customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Employee Survey

D2. Expectations on Customer Service (cont.)

	Strongly Disagree		Neither Disagree Nor Agree				Strongly Agree
I should enjoy having the confidence to provide good service.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I should enjoy remembering my customers' names.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I should enjoy getting to know my customers personally.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION III: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This last section has questions that will only be used to group your responses with others of similar backgrounds. Please check the relevant box for each question or write in the appropriate response.

<p>1. What is your gender?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male</p>	<p>2. What was your age on your last birthday?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> up to 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> over 49</p>
<p>3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (please check one box only)</p> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> No qualification</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> A-Level</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Upper School</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Diploma</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> City and Guilds</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Degree/HND</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Secondary School</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> GCSE</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> NVQ</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree/MBA</div></div> <div><div><input type="checkbox"/> GNVQ</div><div><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)</div></div>	

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME OUT OF YOUR BUSY DAY TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY. YOUR COOPERATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

PLEASE PUT YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY IN THE FREE POST ENVELOPE PROVIDED. THE DEPARTMENT MANAGER WILL COLLECT ALL THE SURVEYS AND SEND IT BY POST TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK RESEARCHER. PLEASE NOTE THAT AT NO STAGE YOUR DEPARTMENT MANAGER WILL SEE YOUR SURVEY.

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